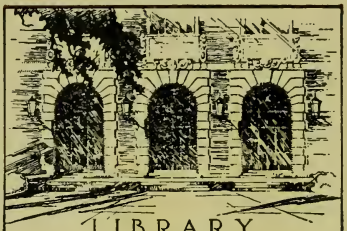

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Oh, holy Mary, protect me! — the Lianhan Shee!!!

Dublin Published by W.F. Wakeman April 1834

TRAITS AND STORIES

OF

THE IRISH PEASANTRY.

SECOND SERIES.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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THE LIANHAN SHEE.

AN IRISH SUPERSTITION

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THE LIANHAN SHEE.

AN IRISH SUPERSTITION.

One summer evening Mary Sullivan was sitting at her own well-swept hearth-stone, knitting feet to a pair of sheep's-grey stockings, for Bartley, her husband. It was one of those serene evenings in the month of June, when the decline of day assumes a calmness and repose, resembling what we might suppose to have irradiated Eden, when our first parents sat in it before their fall. The beams of the sun shone through the windows in clear shafts of amber light, exhibiting millions of those atoms which float to the naked eye within its mild radiance. The dog lay barking in his dream at her feet, and the grey cat sat purring placidly upon his back, from which even his occasional agitation did not dislodge her.

Mrs. Sullivan was the wife of a wealthy farmer, and niece to the Rev. Felix O'Rourke; her kitchen was consequently large, comfortable, and warm. Over where she sat, jutted out the "brace" well lined

with bacon; to the right hung a well-scoured salt-box, and to the left was the jamb, with its little gothic paneless window to admit the light. Within it hung several ash rungs, seasoning for flail-sooples, a dozen of eel-skins, and several stripes of horse-skin, as hangings for them. The dresser was a "parfit white," and well furnished with the usual appurtenances. Over the door and on the "threshel," were nailed, "for luck," two horse-shoes that had been found by accident. In a little "hole" in the wall, beneath the salt-box, lay a great bottle of holy water to keep the place purified; and against the cope-stone of the gable, on the outside, grew a large lump of house-leek, as a specific for sore eyes.

In the corner of the garden were a few stalks of tansy "to kill the thievin' worms in the childhre, the crathurs," together with a little Rosenoble, Solomon's Seal, and Bugloss, each for some medicinal purpose. The "lime wather" Mrs. Sullivan could make herself, and the "bog bane" for the *linh roe*, or heart-burn, grew in their own meadow-drain; so that, in fact, she had within her reach a very decent pharmacopœia, perhaps as harmless as that of the profession itself. Lying on the top of the salt-box was a bunch of fairy flax, and sewed in the folds of her own scapular, was the dust of what had once been a four-leafed shamrock, an invaluable specific "for seein' the good people," if they happened to come within the bounds of vision. Over the door in the inside, over the beds, and over the cattle in the out-houses, were placed branches of withered palm, that had been consecrated by the priest on Palm Sunday;

and when the cows happened to calve, this good woman tied, with her own hands, a woollen thread about their tails, to prevent them from being overlooked by evil eyes, or elf-shot by the fairies, who seem to possess a peculiar power over females of every species during the season of parturition. It is unnecessary to mention the variety of charms which she possessed for that obsolete malady the colick, for tooth-aches, head-aches, or for removing warts, and taking motes out of the eyes; let it suffice to inform our readers that she was well stocked with them; and that in addition to this, she, together with her husband, drank a potion made up and administered by an herb-doctor, for preventing for ever the slightest misunderstanding or quarrel between man and wife. Whether it produced this desirable object or not our readers may conjecture, when we add, that the herb-doctor, after having taken a very liberal advantage of their generosity, was immediately compelled to disappear from the neighbourhood, in order to avoid meeting with Bartley, who had a sharp look out for him, not exactly on his own account, but "in regard," he said, "that it had no effect upon *Mary*, at all a all;" whilst Mary, on the other hand, admitted its efficacy upon herself, but maintained, "that *Bartley* was worse nor ever afther it."

Such was Mary Sullivan, as she sat at her own hearth, quite alone, engaged as we have represented her. What she may have been meditating on we cannot pretend to ascertain; but after some time, she looked sharply into the "backstone," or hob, with an air of anxiety and alarm. By and by she

suspended her knitting, and listened with much earnestness, leaning her right ear over to the hob, from whence the sounds to which she paid such deep attention, proceeded. At length she crossed herself devoutly, and exclaimed, "Queen of saints about us! —is it back yees are? Well sure there's no use in talkin', bekase they say you know what's said of you, or to you—an' we may as well spake yees fair.—Hem —musha yees are welcome back, crickets, avourneenee! I hope that, not like the last visit ye ped us, yees are comin' for luck now! Moolyeen* died, any way, soon afther your other *kailyee*,† ye crathurs ye. Here's the bread, an' the salt, an' the male for yees, an' we wish yees well. Eh?—saints above, if it isn't listenin' they are jist like a Christhen! Wurrah, but yees are the wise an' the quare crathurs all out."

She then shook a little holy water over the hob, and muttered to herself an Irish charm or prayer against the evils which crickets are often supposed by the peasantry to bring with them, and requested, still in the words of the charm, that their presence might, on that occasion, rather be a presage of good fortune to man and beast belonging to her.

"There now, ye *dhonhans* ye, sure ye can't say that ye're ill thrated here, anyhow, or ever was mocked or made game of in the same family. You have got your hansel, an' full an' plenty of it; hopin' at the same time that you'll have no rason in life to cut our best clothes from rivinge. Sure an' I did'nt desarve to have my brave stuff *long body* cut an'

* A cow without horns. † Short visit.

riddled the way it was, the last time yees wor here, an' only bekase little Barny, that has but the sinse of a *gorsoon*, tould yees in a joke to pack off wid yourselves somewhere else. Musha, never heed what the likes of him says; sure he's but a *caudy*,* that doesn't mane ill, only the bit o' divarsion wid yees."

She then resumed her knitting, occasionally stopping, as she changed her needles, to listen, with her ear set, as if she wished to augur from the nature of their chirping, whether they came for good or evil. This, however, seemed to be beyond her faculty of translating their language; for after sagely shaking her head two or three times, she knit more busily than before.

At this moment, the shadow of a person passing the house darkened the window opposite which she sat, and immediately a tall female, of a wild dress and aspect, entered the kitchen.

"*Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr!* the blessin' o' Goodness upon you, dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, addressing her in those kindly phrases so peculiar to the Irish language.

Instead of making her any reply, however, the woman, whose eye glistened with a wild depth of meaning, exclaimed in low tones, apparently of much anguish, "*Husht, husht, dherum!* husht, husht, I say —let me alone—I will do it—will you husht? I will, I say—I will—there now—that's it—be quiet, an' I will do it—be quiet!" and as she thus spoke, she turned her face back over her left shoulder, as if some invisible being dogged her steps, and stood bending over her.

* A little boy.

" *Gho manhy dhea ghud, a ban chohr, dherhum areesht!* the blessin' o' God on you, honest woman, I say again," said Mrs. Sullivan, repeating that *sacred* form of salutation with which the peasantry address each other. " 'Tis a fine evenin', honest woman, glory be to him that sent the same, and amin! If it was cowld, I'd be axin' you to draw your chair in to the fire; but, any way, wont you sit down?"

As she ceased speaking the piercing eye of the strange woman became rivetted on her with a glare, which, whilst it startled Mrs. Sullivan, seemed full of an agony that almost abstracted her from external life. It was not, however, so wholly absorbing as to prevent it from expressing a marked interest, whether for good or evil, in the woman who addressed her so hospitably.

" Husht, now—husht," she said, as if aside—" husht, won't you—sure I may speak *the thing* to her—you said it—there now, husht!" And then fastening her dark eyes on Mrs. Sullivan, she smiled bitterly and mysteriously.

" I know you well," she said, without, however, returning the *blessing* contained in the usual reply to Mrs. Sullivan's salutation—" I know you well, Mary Sullivan—husht, now, husht—yes, I know you well, and the power of all that you carry about you; but you'd be better than you are—and that's well enough *now*—if you had sense to know—ah, ah, ah!—what's this!" she exclaimed abruptly, with three distinct shrieks, that seemed to be produced by sensations of sharp and piercing agony.

" In the name of goodness, what's over you, honest

woman?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, as she started from her chair, and ran to her in a state of alarm, bordering on terror—"Is it sick you are?"

The woman's face had got haggered, and its features distorted; but in a few minutes they resumed their peculiar expression of settled wildness and mystery. "Sick!" she replied, licking her parched lips, "*awirck, awirck*, look! look!" and she pointed with a shudder that almost convulsed her whole frame, to a lump that rose on her shoulders: this, be it what it might, was covered with a red cloak, closely pinned and tied with great caution about her body—"'tis here!—I have it!"

"Blessed mother!" exclaimed Mrs. Sullivan, tottering over to her chair, as finished a picture of horror as the eye could witness, "this day's Friday, the saints stand betwixt me an' all harm! Oh, holy Mary, protect me! *Nhanim an airh*," &c. and she forthwith proceeded to bless herself, which she did thirteen times in honour of the blessed virgin and the twelve apostles.

"Ay, it's as you see!" replied the stranger, bitterly. "It is here—husht, now—husht, I say—I will say *the thing* to her, mayn't I? Ay, indeed, Mary Sullivan, 'tis with me always—always. Well, well, no, I wont, I wont—easy, Oh, blessed saints, easy, and I wont!"

In the mean time Mrs. Sullivan had uncorked her bottle of holy water, and plentifully bedewed herself with it, as a preservative against this mysterious woman and her dreadful secret.

"Blessed mother above!" she ejaculated, "the

Lianhan Shee!" And as she spoke, with the holy water in the palm of her hand, she advanced cautiously, and with great terror, to throw it upon the stranger and the unearthly thing she bore.

"Don't attempt it!" shouted the other, in tones of mingled fierceness and terror; "do you want to give *me* pain without keeping *yourself* any thing at all safer? Don't you know *it* doesn't care about your holy water? But I'd suffer for it, an' perhaps so would you."

Mrs. Sullivan, terrified by the agitated looks of the woman, drew back with affright, and threw the holy water with which she intended to purify the other on her own person.

"Why thin, you lost crathur, who or what are you at all?—don't, don't—for the sake of all the saints and angels of heaven, don't come next or near me—keep your distance—but what are you, or how did you come to get that 'good thing' you carry about wid you?"

"Ay, indeed!" replied the woman bitterly, "as if I would or could tell you that! I say, you woman, you're doing what's not right in asking me a question you ought not let to cross your lips—look to yourself, and what's over you."

The simple woman, thinking her meaning literal, almost leaped off her seat with terror, and turned up her eyes to ascertain whether or not any dreadful appearance had approached her, or hung over her where she sat.

"Woman," said she, "I spoke you kind an' fair, an' I wish you well—but——"

"But what?" replied the other—and her eyes kindled into deep and profound excitement, apparently upon very slight grounds.

"Why—hem—nothin' at all sure, only"——

"Only what?" asked the stranger, with a face of anguish that seemed to torture every feature out of its proper lineaments.

"Dacent woman," said Mrs. Sullivan, whilst the hair began to stand with terror upon her head, "sure it's no wondher in life that I'm in a perplexity, whin a *Lianhan Shee* is undher the one roof wid me. 'Tisn't that I want to know any thing at all about it—the dear forbid I should; but I never hard of a person bein' tormented wid it as you are. I always used to hear the people say, that it thrated its friends well."

"Husht!" said the woman, looking wildly over her shoulder, "I'll not tell: it's on myself I'll leave the blame! Why, will you never pity me? Am I to be night and day tormented? Oh, you're wicked and cruel for no reason!"

"Thry," said Mrs. Sullivan, "an' bless yourself; call on God."

"Ah!" shouted the other, "are you going to get me killed?" and as she uttered the words, a spasmodic working which must have occasioned great pain, even to torture, became audible in her throat: her bosom heaved up and down, and her head was bent repeatedly on her breast, as if by force.

"Don't mention that name," said she, "in my presence, except you mean to drive me to utter distraction. I mean," she continued, after considerable effort to recover her former tone and manner—"hear

me with attention—I mean, woman—you, Mary Sullivan—that if you mention that holy name, you might as well keep plunging sharp knives into my heart! Husht! peace to me for one minute, tormentor! Spare me something, I'm in your power!"

"Will you ate any thing?" said Mrs. Sullivan; "poor crathur, you look like hunger an' distress; there's enough in the house, blessed be them that sent it! an' you had betther thry an' take some nourishment, any way;" and she raised her eyes in a silent prayer of relief and ease for the unhappy woman, whose unhallowed association had, in her opinion, sealed her doom.

"Will I?—will I?—oh!" she replied, "may you never know misery for offering it! Oh, bring me something—some refreshment—some food—for I'm dying with hunger."

Mrs. Sullivan, who, with all her superstition, was remarkable for charity and benevolence, immediately placed food and drink before her, which the stranger absolutely devoured—taking care occasionally to secrete under the protuberance which appeared behind her neck, a portion of what she eat. This, however, she did, not by stealth, but openly; merely taking means to prevent the concealed thing from being, by any possible accident, discovered.

When the craving of hunger was satisfied, she appeared to suffer less from the persecution of her tormentor than before; whether it was, as Mrs. Sullivan thought, that the food with which she plied it, appeased in some degree its irritability, or lessened that of the stranger, it was difficult to say; at all

events, she became more composed; her eyes resumed somewhat of a natural expression, each sharp ferocious glare, which shot from them with such intense and rapid flashes, partially disappeared; her knit brows dilated, and part of a forehead, which had once been capacious and handsome, lost the contractions which deformed it by deep wrinkles. Altogether the change was evident, and very much relieved Mrs. Sullivan, who could not avoid observing it.

"It's not that I care much about it, if you'd think it not right o' me, but it's odd enough for you to keep the lower part of your face muffled up in that black cloth, an' then your forehead, too, is covered down on your face a bit? If they're part of the *bargain*,"—and she shuddered at the thought—"between you an' any thing that's not good—hem!—I think you'd do well to throw thim off o' you, an' turn to thim that can protect you from every thing that's bad. Now a scapular would keep all the divils in hell from one; an' if you'd"——

On looking at the stranger she hesitated, for the wild expression of her eyes began to return.

"Don't begin my punishment again," replied the woman; "make no allus——don't make mention in my presence of any thing that's good. Husht,—husht—it's beginning—easy now—easy! No," said she, "I came to tell you, that only for my breaking a vow I made to this thing upon me, I'd be happy instead of miserable with it. I say, it's a good thing to have, if the person will use this bottle," she added, producing one, "as I will direct them."

"I wouldn't wish, for my part," replied Mrs.

Sullivan, "to have any thing to do wid it—neither act nor part;" and she crossed herself devoutly, on contemplating such an unholy alliance as that at which her companion hinted.

"Mary Sullivan," replied the other, "I can put good-fortune and happiness in the way of you and yours. It is for you the good is intended; if *you* don't get both, *no other* can," and her eyes kindled as she spoke like those of the Pythoness in the moment of inspiration.

Mrs. Sullivan looked at her with awe, fear, and a strong mixture of curiosity; she had often heard that the *Lianhan Shee* had, through means of the person to whom it was bound, conferred wealth upon several, although it could never render this important service to those who exercised direct authority over it. She, therefore, experienced something like a conflict between her fears and a love of that wealth, the possession of which was so plainly intimated to her.

"The money," said she, "would be one thing, but to have the *Lianhan Shee* planted over a body's shouldher—och! the saints preserve us!—no, not for oceans of hard goold would I have it in my company one minnit. But in regard to the money—hem!—why, if it could be managed widout havin' act or part wid *that thing*, people would do any thing in rason an' fairity."

"You have this day been kind to me," replied the woman, "and that's what I can't say of many—dear help me!—husht! Every door is shut in my face! Does not every cheek get pale when I am seen? If I meet a fellow-creature on the road, they turn into the

field to avoid me; if I ask for food, it's to a deaf ear I speak; if I am thirsty, they send me to the river. What house would shelter me? In cold, in hunger, in *dhruth*, in storm, and in tempest, I am alone and unfriended, hated, feared, an' avoided; starving in the winter's cold, and burning in the summer's heat. All this is my fate here; and—oh! oh! oh!—have mercy, tormentor—have mercy! I will not lift my thoughts *there*—I'll keep the paction—but spare me *now!*"

She turned round as she spoke, seeming to follow an invisible object, or, perhaps, attempting to get a more complete view of the mysterious being which exercised such a terrible and painful influence over her Mrs. Sullivan, also, kept her eye fixed upon the lump, and actually believed that she saw it move. Fear of incurring the displeasure of what it contained, and a superstitious reluctance harshly to thrust a person from her door who had eaten of her food, prevented her from desiring the woman to depart.

"In the name of Goodness," she replied, "I will have nothing to do wid your gift. Providence, blessed be his name, has done well for me an' mine; an' it mightn't be right to go beyant what it has pleased *him* to give me."

"A rational sentiment!—I mean there's good sense in what you say," answered the stranger: "but you need not be afraid," and she accompanied the expression by holding up the bottle and kneeling: "now," she added, "listen to me, and judge for yourself, if what I say, when I swear it, can be a lie." She then proceeded to utter oaths of the most solemn

nature, the purport of which was to assure Mrs. Sullivan that drinking of the bottle would be attended with no danger.

" You see this little bottle, drink it. Oh, for my sake and your own, drink it; it will give wealth without end, to you, and to all belonging to you. Take one half of it before sun-rise, and the other half when he goes down. You must stand while drinking it, with your face to the east, in the morning; and at night, to the west. Will you promise to do this?"

" How would drinkin' the bottle get me money?" inquired Mrs. Sullivan, who certainly felt a strong tendency of heart to the wealth.

" That I can't tell now, nor would you understand it, even if I could; but you will know all when what I say is complied with.'

" Keep your bottle, dacent woman. I wash my hands out of it: the saints above guard me from the timptation! I'm sure it's not right, for as I'm a sinner, 'tis gettin' stronger every minute widin me! Keep it; I'm loth to bid any one that *ett* o' my bread to go from my hearth, but if you go, I'll make it worth your while. Saints above, what's comin' over me In my whole life I never had such a hankerin' afther money! Well, well, but it's quare entirely!"

" Will you drink it?" asked her companion. " If it does hurt or harm to you or yours, or any thing but good, may what is hanging over me be fulfilled!" and she extended a thin, but, considering her years, not ungraceful arm, in the act of holding out the bottle to her kind entertainer.

" For the sake of all that's good and gracious take it without scruple—it is not hurtful, a child might drink every drop that's in it. Oh, for the sake of all you love, and of all that love you, take it!" and as she urged her, the tears streamed down her cheeks.

" No, no," replied Mrs. Sullivan, " it'll never cross my lips; not if it made me as rich as ould Hendherson, that airs his guineas in the sun, for fraid they'd get light by lyin' past."

" I entreat you to take it?" said the strange woman.

" Never, never!—once for all—I say, I won't; so spare your breath."

The firmness of the good housewife was not, in fact, to be shaken; so, after exhausting all the motives and arguments with which she could urge the accomplishment of her design, the strange woman, having again put the bottle into her bosom, prepared to depart.

She had now once more become calm, and resumed her seat with the languid air of one who has suffered much exhaustion and excitement. She put her hand upon her forehead for a few moments, as if collecting her faculties, or endeavouring to remember the purport of their previous conversation. A slight moisture had broken through her skin, and altogether, notwithstanding her avowed criminality in entering into an unholy bond, she appeared an object of deep compassion.

In a moment, her manner changed again, and her eyes blazed out once more, as she asked her alarmed hostess,

" Again, Mary Sullivan, will you take the gift that I have it in my power to give you? ay or no? speak, poor mortal, if you know what is for your own good?"

Mrs. Sullivan's fears, however, had overcome her love of money, particularly as she thought that wealth obtained in such a manner could not prosper; her only objection being to the means of acquiring it.

" Oh!" said the stranger, " am I doomed never to meet with any one who will take the promise off me by drinking of this bottle. Oh! but I am unhappy! What it is to fear—ah! ah!—and keep *his* commandments. Had *I* done so in my youthful time, I wouldn't now—ah—merciful mother, is there no relief? kill me, tormentor; kill me outright, for surely the pangs of hereafter cannot be greater than those you now make me suffer. Woman," said she, and her muscles stood out in extraordinary energy—" woman, Mary Sullivan—ay, if you should kill me—blast me—where I stand, I will say the word—woman—you have daughters—teach them—to fear—" Having got so far, she stopped—her bosom heaved up and down—her frame shook dreadfully—her eyeballs became lurid and fiery—her hands were clenched, and the spasmodic throes of inward convulsion worked the white froth up to her mouth; at length she suddenly became like a statue, with this wild supernatural expression intense upon her, and with an awful calmness, by far more dreadful than excitement could be, concluded by pronouncing in deep husky tones, the name of God.

Having accomplished this with such a powerful

struggle, she turned round with pale despair in her countenance and manner, and with streaming eyes slowly departed, leaving Mrs. Sullivan in a situation not at all to be envied.

In a short time the other members of the family who had been out at their evening employments, returned. Bartley, her husband, having entered somewhat sooner than his three daughters from milking, was the first to come in; presently the girls followed, and in a few minutes they sat down to supper, together with the servants, who dropped in one by one, after the toil of the day. On placing themselves about the table, Bartley as usual took his seat at the head; but Mrs. Sullivan, instead of occupying hers, sat at the fire in a state of uncommon agitation. Every two or three minutes she would cross herself devoutly, and mutter such prayers against spiritual influences of an evil nature, as she could compose herself to remember.

"Thin, why don't you come to your supper, Mary," said the husband, "while the sowans are warm? Brave and thick they are this night, any way."

His wife was silent, for so strong a hold had the strange woman and her appalling secret upon her mind, that it was not till he repeated his question three or four times—raising his head with surprise, and asking, "Eh, thin Mary, what's come over you—is it unwell you are?"—that she noticed what he said.

"Supper!" she exclaimed, "unwell! 'tis a good right I'd have to be unwell, even if I was, which I am not—that is to *say* unwell—but I'm all through-

other—I hope nothin' bad will happen, any way. Feel my face, Nannie," she added, addressing one of her daughters, " it's as cowld an' wet as a lime-stone —ay, an' if you found me a corpse before you, it wouldn't be at all strange."

There was a general pause at the seriousness of this intimation. The husband rose from his supper, and went up to the hearth where she sat.

" Turn round to the light," said he; " why Mary dear, in the name of wondher, what ails you? for you're like a corpse sure enough. Can't you tell us what has happened, or what put you in such a state? Why, childhre, the cowld sweat 's teemin' off her!"

The poor woman, unable to sustain the shock produced by her interview with the stranger, found herself getting more weak, and requested a drink of water; but before it could be put to her lips, she laid her head upon the back of the chair and fainted. Grief, and uproar, and confusion, followed this alarming incident. The presence of mind, so necessary on such occasions, was wholly lost; one ran here, and another there, all jostling against each other, without being cool enough to render her proper assistance. The daughters were in tears, and Bartley himself was dreadfully shocked by seeing his wife apparently lifeless before him.

She soon recovered, however, and relieved them from the apprehension of her death, which they thought had actually taken place. " Mary," said the husband, " something quare entirely has happened, or you wouldn't be in this state!"

"Did any of you see a strange woman lavin' the house, a minute or two before yees came in?" she inquired.

"No," they replied, "not a stim of any one did we see."

"Wurrah dheelish! No?—now is it possible yees didn't?" She then described her, but all declared they had seen no such person.

"Bartley, whisper," said she, and beckoning him over to her, in few words she revealed the secret. The husband grew pale and crossed himself. "Mother of Saints! childhre," said he, "a *Lianhan Shee!*" The words were no sooner uttered, than every countenance assumed the pallidness of death; and every right hand was raised in the act of blessing the person, and crossing the forehead. "*The Lianhan Shee!!*" all exclaimed in fear and horror—"This day's Friday, God betwixt us an' harm!"

It was now after dusk, and the hour had already deepened into the darkness of a calm, moonless, summer night; the hearth, therefore, in a short time, became surrounded by a circle, consisting of every person in the house; the door was closed and securely bolted;—a struggle for the safest seat took place; and to Bartley's shame be it spoken, he lodged himself on the hob within the jamb, as the most distant situation from the fearful being known as the *Lianhan Shee*. The recent terror, however, brooded over them all; their topic of conversation was the mysterious visit, of which Mrs. Sullivan gave a painfully accurate detail; whilst every ear of those who composed her audience was set, and every single hair of

their heads bristled up, as if awakened into distinct life by the story. Bartley looked into the fire soberly, except when the cat, in prowling about the dresser, electrified him into a start of fear, which sensation went round every link of the living chain about the hearth.

The next day the story spread through the whole parish, accumulating in interest and incident as it went. Where it received the touches, embellishments, and emendations, with which it was amplified, it would be difficult to say; every one told it, forsooth, *exactly* as he heard it from another; but indeed it is not improbable, that those through whom it passed, were unconscious of the additions it had received at their hands. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that imagination in such cases often colours highly without a premeditated design of falsehood. Fear and dread, however, accompanied its progress; such families as had neglected to keep holy water in their houses borrowed some from their neighbours; every old prayer which had become rusty from disuse, was brightened up—charms were hung about the necks of cattle—and gospels about those of children—crosses were placed over the doors and windows;—no unclean water was thrown out before sunrise or after dusk—

> "E'en those prayed now who never prayed before,
> And those who always prayed, still prayed the more."

The inscrutable woman who caused such general dismay in the parish, was an object of much pity.

Avoided, feared, and detested, she could find no rest for her weary feet, nor any shelter for her unprotected head. If she was seen approaching a house, the door and windows were immediately closed against her; if met on the way she was avoided as a pestilence. How she lived no one could tell, for none would permit themselves to know. It was asserted that she existed without meat or drink, and that she was doomed to remain possessed of life, the prey of hunger and thirst, until she could get some one weak enough to break the spell by drinking her hellish draught, to taste which, they said, would be to change places with herself, and assume her despair and misery.

There had lived in the country about six months before her appearance in it, a man named Stephenson. He was unmarried, and the last of his family. This person led a solitary and secluded life, and exhibited during the last years of his existence strong symptoms of eccentricity, which for some months before his death, assumed a character of unquestionable derangement. He was found one morning hanging by a halter in his own stable, where he had, under the influence of his malady, committed suicide. At this time the public press had not, as now, familiarized the minds of the people to that dreadful crime, and it was consequently looked upon *then* with an intensity of horror, of which we can scarcely entertain any adequate notion. His farm remained unoccupied, for while an acre of land could be obtained in any other quarter, no man would enter upon such unhallowed premises. The house was locked up, and it was currently reported that Stephenson and

the devil each night repeated the hanging scene in the stable; and that when the former was committing the "hopeless sin," the halter slipped several times from the beam of the stable loft, when Satan came, in the shape of a dark-complexioned man with a hollow voice, and secured the rope until Stephenson's end was accomplished.

In this stable did the wanderer take up her residence at night; and when we consider the belief of the people in the night-scenes which occurred in it, we need not be surprised at the new feature of horror which this circumstance superadded to her character. Her presence and appearance in the parish were dreadful; a public outcry was soon raised against her, which, were it not from fear of her power over their lives and cattle, would have ended in her death. None, however, had courage to grapple with her, or to attempt expelling her by violence, lest a signal vengeance might be taken on any who dared to injure a woman that could call in the terrible aid of the *Lianhan Shee*.

In this state of feeling they applied to the parish priest, who, on hearing the marvellous stories related concerning her, and on questioning each man closely upon his authority, could perceive, that like most other reports, they were to be traced principally to the imagination and fears of the people. He ascertained, however, enough from Bartley Sullivan, to justify a belief that there was something certainly uncommon about the woman; and being of a cold, phlegmatic disposition, with some humour, he desired them to go home, if they were wise—he shook

his head mysteriously as he spoke—"and do the woman no injury, if they didn't wish"——and with this abrupt hint he sent them about their business.

This, however, did not satisfy them. In the same parish lived a suspended priest, called Father Philip O'Dallaghy, who supported himself, as most of them do, by curing certain diseases of the people—miraculously! He had no other means of subsistence, nor, indeed, did he seem strongly devoted to life, or to the pleasures it afforded. He was not addicted to those intemperate habits which characterise "Blessed Priests" in general; spirits he never tasted, nor any food that could be termed a luxury, or even a comfort. His communion with the people was brief, and marked by a tone of severe contemptuous misanthropy. He seldom stirred abroad except during morning, or in the evening twilight, when he might be seen gliding amidst the coming darkness, like a dissatisfied spirit. His life was an austere one, and his devotional practices were said to be of the most remorseful character. Such a man, in fact, was calculated to hold a powerful sway over the prejudices and superstitions of the people. This was true. His power was considered almost unlimited, and his life one that would not disgrace the highest saint in the calendar. There were not wanting some persons in the parish who hinted that Father Felix O'Rourke, the parish priest, was himself rather reluctant to incur the displeasure, or challenge the power of the *Lianhan Shee*, by driving its victim out of the parish. The opinion of these persons was, in its distinct unvarnished reality, that Father Felix absolutely showed

the white feather on this critical occasion—that he became shy, and begged leave to decline being introduced to this intractable pair—seeming to intimate that he did not at all relish adding them to the stock of his acquaintances.

Father Philip they considered as a decided contrast to him on this point. His stern and severe manner, rugged, and when occasion demanded, daring, they believed suitable to the qualities requisite for sustaining such an interview. They accordingly waited on him; and after Bartley and his friends had given as faithful a report of the circumstances, as, considering all things, could be expected, he told Bartley he would hear from Mrs. Sullivan's own lips the authentic narrative. This was quite satisfactory, and what was expected from him. As for himself, he appeared to take no particular interest in the matter, further than that of allaying the ferment and alarm which had spread through the parish.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "she came in to Mary, and she alone in the house, and for the matther o' that, I believe she laid hands upon her, and tossed and tumbled the crathur, and she but a sickly woman, through the four corners of the house. Not that Mary lets an so much, but I know from her way, when she spakes about her, that it's thruth, your Reverence."

"But didn't the *Lianhan Shee*," said one of them, "put a sharp-pointed knife to her breast, wid a divilish intintion of makin' her give the best of atin' an' dhrinkin' the house afforded?"

"She got the victuals, to a sartinty," replied

Bartley, " and ' overlooked' my woman for her pains; for she's not the picture of herself since."

Every one now told some magnified and terrible circumstance, illustrating the formidable power of the Lianhan Shee.

When they had finished, the sarcastic lip of the priest curled into an expression of irony and contempt; his brow, which was naturally black and heavy, darkened; and a keen, but rather ferocious-looking eye, shot forth a glance, which, while it intimated disdain for those to whom it was directed, spoke also of a dark and troubled spirit in himself. The man seemed to brook with scorn the degrading situation of a religious quack, to which some incontrollable destiny had doomed him.

" I shall see your wife to-morrow," said he to Bartley; " and after hearing the plain account of what happened, I will consider what is best to be done with this dark, perhaps unhappy, perhaps guilty character; but whether dark, or unhappy, or guilty, I for one, should not, and will not, avoid her. Go, and bring me word to-morrow evening, when I can see her on the following day. Begone!"

When they withdrew, Father Philip paced his room for some time in silence and anxiety.

" Ay," said he, " wretches! sunk in the grossest superstition and ignorance, yet, perhaps, happier in your degradation than those who, in the pride of knowledge, can only look back upon a life of crime and misery. What is a sceptic? What is an infidel? Men who, when they will not submit to moral restraint, harden themselves into scepticism and

infidelity, until, in the headlong career of guilt, that which was first adopted to lull the outcry of conscience, is supported by the pretended pride of principle. Principle in a sceptic! Hollow and devilish lie! Would *I* have plunged into scepticism, had I not first violated the moral sanctions of religion? Never. I became an infidel, because I first became a villain! Writhing under a load of guilt, that which I wished might be true, I soon forced myself to think true: and now"—he here clenched his hands and groaned—"now—ay, now—and hereafter—oh, *that* hereafter! Why can I not shake the thoughts of it from my conscience? Religion! Christianity! With all the hardness of an infidel's heart, I feel your truth; because, if every man were the villain that infidelity would make him, then indeed might every man curse God for the existence bestowed upon him—as I would, but dare not do. Yet why can I not believe?—Alas! why should God accept an unrepentant heart? Am I not a hypocrite, mocking him by a guilty pretension to his power, and leading the dark into thicker darkness? Then these hands—blood! —broken vows!—ha! ha! ha! Well, go—let misery have its laugh, like the light that breaks from the thunder-cloud. Prefer Voltaire to Christ; sow the wind, and reap the whirlwind, as I have done—ha, ha, ha! Swim, world—swim about me! I have lost the ways of Providence, and am dark! *She* awaits me; but I broke the chain that galled us: yet it still rankles—still rankles!"

The unhappy man threw himself into a chair in a paroxysm of frenzied agony. For more than an hour

he sat in the same posture, until he became gradually hardened into a stiff, lethargic insensibility, callous and impervious to feeling, reason, or religion—an awful transition from a visitation of conscience so terrible as that which he had just suffered. At length he arose, and by walking moodily about, relapsed into his usual gloomy and restless character.

When Bartley went home, he communicated to his wife Father Philip's intention of calling on the following day, to hear a correct account of the *Lianhan Shee*

"Why, thin," said she, "I'm glad of it, for I intinded myself to go to him, any way, to get my new scapular consecrated. How-an'-ever, as he's to come, I'll get a set of gospels for the boys an' girls, an' he can consecrate all when his hand's in. Aroon, Bartley, they say that man's so holy that he can do any thing—ay, melt a body off the face o' the earth, like snow off a ditch. Dear me, but the power they have is strange all out!"

"There's no use in gettin' him any thing to ate or dhrink," replied Bartley; "he wouldn't take a glass o' whiskey once in seven years. Throth, myself thinks he's a little too dhry; sure he might be holy enough, an' yet take a sup of an odd time. There's Father Felix, an' though we all know he's far from bein' so blessed a man as him, yet he has friendship an' neighbourliness in him, an' never refuses a glass in rason."

"But do you know what I was tould about Father Philip, Bartley?"

"I'll tell you that afther I hear it, Mary, my

woman; you won't expect me to tell what I don't know?—ha, ha, ha!"

"Behave, Bartley, an' quit your jokin' now, at all evints; keep it till we're talkin' of somethin' else, an' don't let us be committin' sin, maybe, while we're spakin' of what we're spakin' about; but they say it's as thrue as the sun to the dial:—the lint afore last itself it was,—he never tasted mate or dhrink durin' the whole seven weeks! Oh, you needn't stare! it's well known by thim that has as much sinse as you—no, not so much as you'd carry on the point o' this knittin'-needle. Well, sure the housekeeper an' the two sarvants wondhered—faix, they couldn't do less—an' took it into their heads to watch him closely; an' what do you think—blessed be all the saints above!—what do you think they *seen?*"

"The goodness above knows; for me—I don't."

"Why, thin, whin he was asleep they seen a small silk thread in his mouth, that came down through the ceilin' from heaven, an' he suckin' it, just as a child would his mother's breast whin the crathur 'ud be asleep: so that was the way he was supported by the angels! An' I remimber myself, though he's a dark, spare, yallow man at all times, yet he never looked half so fat an' rosy as he did the same lint!"

"Glory be to Heaven! Well, well—*it is* sthrange the power they have! As for him, I'd as *lee* meet St. Pether, or St. Pathrick himself, as him; for one can't but fear him, somehow."

"Fear him! Och, it 'ud be the pity o' thim that 'ud do anything to vex or anger that man. Why, his very look 'ud wither thim, till there wouldn't be

the thrack* o' thim on the earth ; an' as for his curse, why it 'ud scorch thim to ashes!"

As it was generally known that Father Philip was to visit Mrs. Sullivan the next day, in order to hear an account of the mystery which filled the parish with such fear, a very great number of the parishioners were assembled in and about Bartley's long before he made his appearance. At length he was seen walking slowly down the road, with an open book in his hand, on the pages of which he looked from time to time. When he approached the house, those who were standing about it assembled in a body, and, with one consent, uncovered their heads, and asked his blessing. His appearance bespoke a mind ill at ease; his face was haggard, and his eyes blood-shot. On seeing the people kneel, he smiled with his usual bitterness, and, shaking his hand with an air of impatience over them, muttered some words, rather in mockery of the ceremony than otherwise. They then rose, and blessing themselves, put on their hats, rubbed the dust off their knees, and appeared to think themselves recruited by a peculiar accession of grace.

On entering the house the same form was repeated; and when it was over, the best chair was placed for him by Mary's own hands, and the fire stirred up, and a line of respect drawn, within which none was to intrude, lest he might feel in any degree incommoded.

" My good neighbour," said he to Mrs. Sullivan, " what strange woman is this, who has thrown the

* Track, foot-mark, put for life.

parish into such a ferment? I'm told she paid you a visit? Pray sit down."

"I humbly thank your Reverence," said Mary, curtseying lowly, "but I'd rather not sit, Sir, if you plase. I hope I know what respect manes, your Reverence? Barny Bradagh, I'll thank you to stand up, if you plase, an' his Reverence to the fore, Barny."

"I ax your Reverence's pardon, an' yours, too, Mrs. Sullivan: sure we didn't mane the disrespect, any how, Sir, plase your Reverence."

"About this woman, and the *Lianhan Shee?*" said the priest, without noticing Barny's apology. "Pray what do you precisely understand by a *Lianhan Shee?*"

"Why, Sir," replied Mary, "some sthrange bein' from the good people, or fairies, that sticks to some persons. There's a bargain, Sir, your Reverence, made atween thim; an' the divil, Sir, that is the ould boy—the saints about us!—has a hand in it. The *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence, is never seen only by thim it keeps wid; but—hem!—it always, wid the help of the ould boy, conthrives, Sir, to make the person brake the agreement, an' thin it has *thim* in *its* power; but if they *don't* brake the agreement, thin *it's* in *their* power. If they can get any body to put in their place, they may get out o' the bargain; for they can, of a sartainty, give oceans o' money to people, but can't take any themselves, plase your Reverence. But sure where's the use o' me to be tellin' your Reverence what you know betther nor myself?—an' why shouldn't you, or any one that has the power you have?"

He smiled again at this in his own peculiar manner, and was proceeding to inquire more particularly into the nature of the interview between them, when the noise of feet, and sounds of general alarm, accompanied by a rush of people into the house, arrested his attention, and he hastily inquired into the cause of the commotion. Before he could receive a reply, however, the house was almost crowded; and it was not without considerable difficulty that, by the exertions of Mrs. Sullivan and Bartley, sufficient order and quiet were obtained to hear distinctly what was said.

"Plase your Reverence," said several voices at once, "they're comin', hot-foot, into the very house to us! Was ever the likes seen? an' they must know right well, Sir, that you're widin in it."

"Who are coming?" he inquired.

"Why the woman, Sir, an' her *good pet*, the *Lianhan Shee*, your Reverence."

"Well," said he, "but why should you all appear so blanched with terror? Let her come in, and we shall see how far she is capable of injuring her fellow-creatures: some maniac," he muttered, in a low soliloquy, "whom the villany of the world has driven into derangement—some victim to a hand like m——. Well, they say there *is* a Providence, yet such things are permitted!"

"He's sayin' a prayer now, observed one of them; "haven't we a good right to be thankful that he's in the place wid us while she's in it, or dear knows what harm she might do us—maybe *rise* the wind!"

As the latter speaker concluded, there was a dead

silence. The persons about the door crushed each other backwards, their feet set out before them, and their shoulders laid with violent pressure against those who stood behind, for each felt anxious to avoid all danger of contact with a being against whose power even a blessed priest found it necessary to guard himself by a prayer.

At length a low murmur ran among the people—"Father O'Rourke!—here's Father O'Rourke!—he has turned the corner afther her, an' they're both comin' in." Immediately they entered, but it was quite evident from the manner of the worthy priest, that he was unacquainted with the person of this singular being. When they crossed the threshold, the priest advanced, and expressed his surprise at the throng of people assembled.

"Plase your Reverence," said Bartley, "*that's* the woman," nodding significantly towards her as he spoke, but without looking at her person, lest the evil eye he dreaded so much might meet his, and give him "the blast."

The dreaded female, on seeing the house in such a crowded state, started, paused, and glanced with some terror at the persons assembled. Her dress was not altered since her last visit; but her countenance, though more meagre and emaciated, expressed but little of the unsettled energy which then flashed from her eyes, and distorted her features by the depth of that mysterious excitement by which she had been agitated. Her countenance was still muffled as before, the awful protuberance rose from her shoulders, and the same band which Mrs. Sullivan had alluded

to during their interview, was bound about the upper part of her forehead.

She had already stood upwards of two minutes, during which the fall of a feather might be heard, yet none bade God bless her—no kind hand was extended to greet her—no heart warmed in affection towards her; on the contrary, every eye glanced at her, as a being marked with enmity towards God. Blanched faces and knit brows, the signs of fear and hatred, were turned upon her; her breath was considered pestilential, and her touch paralysis. There she stood, proscribed, avoided, and hunted like a tigress, all fearing to encounter, yet wishing to exterminate her! Who could she be?—or what had she done, that the finger of the Almighty marked her out for such a fearful weight of vengeance?

Father Philip rose and advanced a few steps, until he stood confronting her. His person was tall, his features dark, severe, and solemn: and when the nature of the investigation about to take place is considered, it need not be wondered at, that the moment was, to those present, one of deep and impressive interest—such as a visible conflict between a supposed champion of God and a supernatural being was calculated to excite.

"Woman," said he, in his deep stern voice, "tell me who and what you are, and why you assume a character of such a repulsive and mysterious nature, when it can entail only misery, shame, and persecution on yourself? I conjure you, in the name of Him after whose image you are created, to speak truly!"

He paused, and the tall figure stood mute before him. The silence was dead as death—every breath was hushed—and the persons assembled stood immovable as statues! Still she spoke not; but the violent heaving of her breast evinced the internal working of some dreadful struggle. Her face before was pale—it was now ghastly; her lips became blue, and her eyes vacant.

"Speak!" said he, "I conjure you in the name of the power by whom you live!"

It is probable that the agitation under which she laboured was produced by the severe effort made to sustain the unexpected trial she had to undergo.

For some minutes her struggle continued; but having begun at its highest pitch, it gradually subsided until it settled in a calmness which appeared fixed and awful as the resolution of despair. With breathless composure she turned round, and put back that part of her dress which concealed her face, except the band on her forehead, which she did not remove; having done this, she turned again, and walked calmly towards Father Philip, with a deadly smile upon her thin lips. When within a step of where he stood, she paused, and rivetting her eyes upon him, exclaimed:

"Who and what am I? The victim of infidelity and you, the bearer of a cursed existence, the scoff and scorn of the world, the monument of a broken vow and a guilty life, a being scourged by the scorpion lash of conscience, blasted by periodical insanity, pelted by the winter's storm, scorched by the summer's heat, withered by starvation, hated by man,

and touched into my inmost spirit by the anticipated tortures of future misery. I have no rest for the sole of my foot, no repose for a head distracted by the contemplation of a guilty life; I am the unclean spirit which walketh to seek rest and findeth none; I am —*what you made me!* Behold," she added, holding up the bottle, "this failed, and I live to accuse you. But no, you are my husband—though our union was but a guilty form, and I will bury that in silence. You thought me dead, and you flew to avoid punishment—did you avoid it? No; the finger of God has written pain and punishment upon your brow. I have been in all characters, in all shapes, have spoken with the tongue of a peasant, moved in my natural sphere; but my knees were smitten, my brain stricken, and the wild malady which banishes me from society has been upon me for years. Such I am, and such I say, have you made me. As for you, kind-hearted woman, there was nothing in this bottle but pure water. The interval of reason returned this day, and having remembered glimpses of our conversation, I came to apologize to you, and to explain the nature of my unhappy distemper, and to beg a little bread, which I have not tasted for two days. I at times conceive myself attended by an evil spirit, shaped out by a guilty conscience, and this is the only familiar which attends me, and by it I have been dogged into madness through every turning of life. Whilst it lasts I am subject to spasms and convulsive starts which are exceedingly painful. The lump on my back is the robe I wore when innocent in my peaceful convent."

The intensity of general interest was now transferred to Father Philip; every face was turned towards him, but he cared not. A solemn stillness yet prevailed among all present. From the moment she spoke, her eye drew his with the power of a basilisk. His pale face became like marble, not a muscle moved; and when she ceased speaking, his blood-shot eyes were still fixed upon her countenance with a gloomy calmness like that which precedes a tempest. They stood before each other, dreadful counterparts in guilt, for truly his spirit was as dark as hers.

At length he glanced angrily around him:—"Well," said he, "what is it now, ye infatuated wretches, to trust in the sanctity *of man?* Learn from me to place the same confidence *in God* which you place in his *guilty creatures*, and you will not lean on a broken reed. Father O'Rourke, you, too, witness my disgrace, but not my punishment. It is pleasant, no doubt, to have a topic for conversation at your Conferences; enjoy it. As for you, Margaret, if society lessen misery, we may be less miserable. But the band of your order, and the remembrance of your vow is on your forehead, like the mark of Cain—tear it off, and let it not blast a man who is the victim of prejudice still, nay of superstition, as well as of guilt; tear it from my sight." His eyes kindled fearfully as he attempted to pull it away by force.

She calmly took it off, and he immediately tore it into pieces, and stamped upon the fragments as he flung them on the ground.

"Come," said the despairing man—"come—there is a shelter for you, *but no peace!*—food, and drink, and raiment, but *no peace!*—NO PEACE!" As he uttered these words, in a voice that rose rapidly to its highest pitch, he took her hand, and they both departed to his own residence.

The amazement and horror of those who were assembled in Bartley's house cannot be described. Our readers may be assured that they deepened in character as they spread through the parish. An undefined fear of this mysterious pair seized upon the people, for their images were associated in their minds with darkness and crime, and supernatural communion. The departing words of Father Philip rang in their ears: they trembled, and devoutly crossed themselves, as fancy again repeated the awful exclamation of the priest—"no peace! no peace!"

When Father Philip and his unhappy associate went home, he instantly made her a surrender of his small property; but with difficulty did he command sufficient calmness to accomplish even this. He was distracted—his blood seemed to have been turned to fire—he clenched his hands, and he gnashed his teeth, and exhibited the wildest symptoms of madness. About ten o'clock he desired fuel for a large fire to be brought into the kitchen, and got a strong cord, which he coiled, and threw carelessly on the table. The family were then ordered to bed. About eleven they were all asleep; and at the solemn hour of twelve he heaped additional fuel upon the living turf, until the blaze shone with scorching light through the kitchen. Dark and desolating was the

tempest within him, as he paced, with agitated steps, before the crackling fire.

"She is risen!" he exclaimed—"the spectre of all my crimes is risen, to haunt me through life! I *am* a murderer—yet she lives, and my guilt is not the less! The stamp of eternal infamy is upon me—the finger of scorn will mark me out—the tongue of reproach will sting me like that of the serpent—the deadly touch of shame will cover me like a leper—the laws of society will crush the murderer, not the less that his wickedness in blood has miscarried: after that comes the black and terrible tribunal of the Almighty's vengeance—of his fiery indignation! Hush!—What sounds are those? They deepen—they deepen! Is it thunder? It cannot be the crackling of the blaze! It *is* thunder!—but it speaks only to *my* ear! Hush!—Great God, there is a change in my voice! It is hollow and supernatural! Could a change have come over me? Am I living? Could I have——Hah!—Could I have departed? and am I now at length given over to the worm that never dies? If it be at my heart I may feel it. God!—I am damned! Here is a viper twined about my limbs, trying to dart its fangs into my heart! Hah!—there are feet pacing in the room, too, and I hear voices! I am surrounded by evil spirits! Who's there?—What are you?—Speak!—They are silent!—There is no answer! Again comes the thunder! But perchance this is not my place of punishment, and I will try to leave these horrible spirits!"

He opened the door, and passed out into a small

green field that lay behind the house. The night was calm, and the silence profound as death. Not a cloud obscured the heavens;—the light of the moon fell upon the stillness of the scene around him, with all the touching beauty of a moonlit midnight in summer. Here he paused a moment, felt his brow, then his heart, the palpitations of which fell audibly upon his ear. He became somewhat cooler; the images of madness which had swept through his stormy brain disappeared, and were succeeded by a lethargic vacancy of thought, which almost deprived him of the consciousness of his own identity. From the green field he descended mechanically to a little glen which opened beside it. It was one of those delightful spots to which the heart clingeth. Its sloping sides were clothed with patches of wood, on the leaves of which the moonlight glanced with a soft lustre, rendered more beautiful by their stillness. That side on which the light could not fall, lay in deep shadow, which occasionally gave to the rocks and small projecting precipices an appearance of monstrous and unnatural life. Having passed through the tangled mazes of the glen, he at length reached its bottom, along which ran a brook, such as in the description of the poet,—

> "———— In the leafy month of June,
> Unto the sleeping woods all night,
> Singeth a quiet tune."

Here he stood, and looked upon the green winding margin of the streamlet—but its song he heard not. With the terrors of a guilty conscience, the beautiful

in nature can have no association. He looked up the glen, but its picturesque windings, soft vistas, and wild underwood mingling with grey rocks and taller trees, all mellowed by the moon-beams, had no charms for him. He maintained a profound silence—but it was not the silence of reflection. He endeavoured to recall the scenes of the past day, but could not bring them back to his memory. Even the fiery tide of thought, which, like burning lava, seared his brain a few moments before, was now cold and hardened. He could remember nothing. The convulsion of his mind was over, and his faculties were impotent and collapsed.

In this state he unconsciously retraced his steps, and had again reached the paddock adjoining his house, when, as he thought, the figure of his paramour stood before him. In a moment his former paroxysm returned, and with it the gloomy images of a guilty mind, charged with the extravagant horrors of brain-struck madness.

"What!" he exclaimed, "the band still on your forehead! Tear it off!"

He caught at the form as he spoke, but there was no resistance to his grasp. On looking again towards the spot she had ceased to be visible. The storm within him arose once more; he rushed into the kitchen, where the fire blazed out with fiercer heat; again he imagined that the thunder came to his ears, but the thunderings which he heard were only the voice of conscience. Again his own footsteps and his voice sounded in his fancy as the footsteps and voices of fiends, with which his imagination peopled the

room. His state and his existence seemed to him a confused and troubled dream; he tore his hair—threw it on the table—and immediately started back with a hollow groan. His locks, which but a few hours before had been as black as the raven's wing, were now white as snow!

On discovering this, he gave a low but frantic laugh. "Ha, ha, ha!" he exclaimed; here is another mark—here is food for despair. Silently, but surely, did the hand of God work this, as a proof that I am hopeless! But I will bear it; I will bear the sight! I now feel myself a man blasted by the eye of God himself! Ha, ha, ha! Food for despair! Food for despair!"

Immediately he passed into his own room, and approaching the looking-glass beheld a sight calculated to move a statue. His hair had become literally white, but the shades of his dark complexion, now distorted by terror and madness, flitted, as his features worked under the influence of his tremendous passions, into an expression so frightful, that deep fear came over himself. He snatched one of his razors, and fled from the glass to the kitchen. He looked upon the fire, and saw the white ashes lying around its edge.

"Ha!" said he, "the light is come! I see the sign. I am directed, and I will follow it. There is yet ONE hope. The immolation! I shall be saved, yet so as by fire. It is for this my hair has become white;—the sublime warning for my self-sacrifice! The colour of ashes!—white—white! It is so!—I will sacrifice my body in material fire, to save my

soul from that which is eternal! But I had anticipated the SIGN! The self-sacrifice is accepted!"

We must here draw a veil over that which ensued, as the description of it would be both unnatural and revolting. Let it be sufficient to say, that the next morning he was found burned to a cinder, with the exception of his feet and legs, which remained as monuments of, perhaps, the most dreadful suicide that ever was committed by man. His razor, too, was found bloody, and several clots of gore were discovered about the hearth; from which circumstances it was plain that he had reduced his strength so much by loss of blood, that when he committed himself to the flames, he was unable, even had he been willing, to avoid the fiery and awful sacrifice of which he made himself the victim. If any thing could deepen the impression of fear and awe, already so general among the people, it was the unparalleled nature of his death. Its circumstances are well known in the parish and county wherein it occurred—*for it is no fiction*, gentle reader! and the titular bishop who then presided over the diocese, declared, that while he lived, no person bearing the unhappy man's name should ever be admitted to the clerical order.

The shock produced by his death struck the miserable woman into the darkness of settled derangement. She survived him some years, but wandered about through the province, still, according to the superstitious belief of the people, tormented by the terrible enmity of the *Lianhan Shee*.—(A.)

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

THE POOR SCHOLAR.

One day about the middle of November in the year 18—, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy were digging potatoes on the side of a hard, barren hill, called Esker Dhu. The day was bitter and wintry, the men were thinly clad, and as the keen blast swept across the hill with considerable violence, the sleet-like rain which it bore along, pelted into their garments with pitiless severity. The father had advanced into more than middle age; and having held, at a rack-rent, the miserable waste of farm which he occupied, he was compelled to exert himself in its cultivation, despite either obduracy of soil, or inclemency of weather. This day, however, was so unusually severe, that the old man began to feel incapable of continuing his toil. The son bore it better; but whenever a cold rush of stormy rain came over them, both were compelled to stand with their sides against it, and their heads turned, so as that the ear almost rested back upon the shoulder, in order to

throw the rain off their faces. Of each, however, that cheek which was exposed to the rain and storm was beaten into a red hue; whilst the other part of their faces was both pale and hunger-pinched.

The father paused to take breath, and, supported by his spade, looked down upon the sheltered inland which, inhabited chiefly by Protestants and Presbyterians, lay rich and warm-looking under him.

"Why thin," he exclaimed to the son—a lad about fifteen,—"sure I know well I oughtn't to curse yees, any way, you black set! an' yit, the Lord forgive me my sins. I'm almost timpted to give yees a volley, an' that from my heart out! Look at thim, Jimmy agra—only look at the black thieves! how warm an' wealthy they sit there in our own ould possessions, an' here we must toil till our fingers are worn to the stumps, upon this thievin' bent. The curse of Cromwell on it!—You might as well ax the divil for a blessin', as expect anything like a dacent crop out of it. Look at thim two ridges!—such a poor sthring o' praties is in it!—one here an' one there—an' yit we must turn up the whole ridge for that same! Well, God sind the time soon, whin the right will take place, Jimmy agrah!"

"An' doesn't Pasthorini say it? Sure whin Twenty-five comes, *we'll* have our own agin: the right will overcome the might—the bottomless pit will be locked—ay, double boulted, if St. Pether gets the kays, for he's the very boy that will accommodate the heretics wid a warm corner; an' yit, faith, there's many o' thim that myself 'ud put in a good word for, afther all."

"Throth, an' here's the same, Jimmy. There's Jack Stuart, an' if there's a cool corner in hell, the same Jack will get it—an' that he may, I pray Gor this day, an' amin! The Lord sind it to him! for he richly desarves it. Kind, neighbourly, and frindly, is he an' all belongin' to him; an' I wouldn't be where a hard word 'ud be spoken of him, nor a dog in connection wid the family ill thrated; for which rason may he get a cool corner in hell, I humbly sufficate."

"What do you think of Jack Taylor? Will he be cosey?"

"Throth I doubt so—a blessed youth is Jack; yit myself 'ud hardly wish it. He's a heerum-skeerum, divil-may-care fellow, no doubt of it, an' laughs at the priests, which same I'm thinkin' will get him below stairs more nor a new-milk heat, any way; but thin, agin, he thrates thim dacent, an' gives thim good dinners, an' they take all this rolliken in good part, so that it's likely he's not in arnest in it, an' surely they ought to know best, Jimmy."

"What do you think of *Yallow Sam?—honest Sam*, that they say was born widout a heart, an' carries the *black* wool in his ears, to keep out the cries of the widows an' the orphans, that are long rotten in their graves through his dark villany?—He'll get a snug birth!"*

"*Yallow Sam*," replied the old man, slowly, and a dark shade of intense hatred blackened his weather-beaten countenance, as he looked in the direction from

* This was actually said of the person alluded to—a celebrated usurer and agent to two or three estates, who was a little deaf, and had his ears occasionally stuffed with black wool.

which the storm blew: "'twas *he* left us where we're standin', Jimmy—undher this blast, that's cowldher an' bittherer nor a step-mother's breath, this cuttin' day! 'Twas *he* turned us on the wide world, whin your poor mother was risin' out of her faver. 'Twas he squenched the hearth, whin she wasn't able to lave the house, till I carried her in my arms into Paddy Cassidy's—the tears fallin' from my eyes upon her face, that I loved next to God. Didn't he give our farm to a purple Orangeman? Out we went, to the winds an' skies of heaven, bekase the rich *bodagh* made intherest aginst us. I tould him whin he chated me out o' my fifteen goolden guineas, that his masther, the landlord, should hear of it; but I could never get next or near him, to make my complaint. Eh?—a snug birth! I'm only afeard that hell has no corner hot enough for him—but lave that to the divil himself: if he doesn't give him the best thratement hell can afford, why I'm not here."

"Divil a one o' the *ould boy's* so bad as they say, father; he gives it to *thim* hot an' heavy, at all evints."

"Why even if he was at a loss about Sam, depind upon it, he'd get a hint from his betthers above, that 'ud be sarviceable."

"They say he visits him as it is, an' that Sam can't sleep widout some one in the room wid him. Dan Philips says the priest was there, an' had a Mass in every room in the house; but Charley Mack tells me there's no thruth in it. He was advised to it, he says; but it seems the ould boy has too strong a hoult of him, for Sam said he'd have the divil any time sooner nor the priest, and its likest what he would say."

"Och, och, Jimmy, avick, I'm tir'd out! We had betther give in; the day's too hard, an' there's no use in standin' agin the weather that's in it. Lave the ould villian to God, who he can't chate, any way."

"Well, may our curse go along wid the rest upon him, for dhrivin' us to sich an unnatural spot as this! Hot an' heavy, into the sowl an' marrow of him may it penethrate! An' sure that's no more than all the counthry's wishin' him, whether or not—not to mintion the curses that's risin' out o' the grave agin him, loud an' piercin'!"

"God knows it's not slavin' yourself on sich a day as this *you'd* be, only for him. Had we kep our farm, you'd be now well an in your larnin' for a priest—an' there 'ud be one o' the family sure to be a gintleman, any how; but that's gone too, agra. Look at the smoke, how comfortable it rises from Jack Sullivan's, where the priest has a Station to-day. 'Tisn't fishin' for a sthray pratie he is, upon a ridge like this. But it can't be helped; an' God's will be done! Not himself!—faix, it's he that'll get the height of good thratement, an' can ride home, well lined, both inside an' outside. Much good may it do him!—'tis but his right."

The lad now paused in his turn, looked down on Jack Sullivan's comfortable house, sheltered by a clump of trees, and certainly saw such a smoke tossed up from the chimney, as gave unequivocal evidence of preparation for a good dinner. He next looked "behind the wind," with a visage made more blank and meagre by the contrast; after which he reflected for a few minutes, as if working up his mind to some sudden

determination. The deliberation, however, was short: he struck his open hand upon the head of the spade with much animation, and instantly took it in both hands, exclaiming:

"Here, father, here goes; to the divil once an' for ever I pitch slavery,"* and as he spoke, the spade was sent as far from him as he had strength to throw it. "To the divil I pitch slavery! An' now, father, wid the help o' God, this is the last day's work I'll ever put my hand to. There's no way of larnin' Latin here; but off to Munster I'll start, an' my face you'll never see in this parish, till I come home a priest an' a gintleman! But that's not all, father dear; I'll rise you out of your distress, or die in the struggle. I can't bear to see your grey hairs in sorrow and poverty."

"Well, Jimmy—well, agra—God enable you, avourneen; 'tis a good intintion. The divil a one o' me will turn another spadeful aither, for this day: I'm *dhrookin'* † wid the rain. We'll go home an' take an air o' the fire—we want it; and aftherwards we can talk about what you're *on* ‡ for."

It is usual to attribute to the English and Scotch character, exclusively, a cool and persevering energy in the pursuit of such objects as inclination or interest may propose for attainment; whilst Irishmen are considered too much the creatures of impulse to reach a point that requires coolness, condensation of thought, and efforts successively repeated. This is a mistake. It is the opinion of Englishmen and Scotchmen who

* Toil—labour.

† Dripping—very wet.

‡ Determined on.

know not the Irish character thoroughly. The fact is, that in the attainment of an object, where a sad-faced Englishman would despair, an Irishman will, probably, laugh, drink, weep, and fight, during his progress to accomplish it. A Scotchman will miss it, perhaps, but, having done all that could be done, he will try another speculation. The Irishman may miss it, too; but to console himself he will break the head of any man who may have impeded him in his efforts, as a proof that he *ought* to have succeeded; or if he cannot manage that point, he will crack the pate of the first man he meets, or he will get drunk, or he will marry a wife, or burn a house, or hamstring a neighbour's cow, or cut the throat of a proctor, or swear a gauger never to show his face in that quarter again, or he will exclaim, if it be concerning a farm, with a countenance full of simplicity—"God bless your honour, long life and honour to you, Sir! Sure an' 'twas but a thrifle, any how, that your Reverence will make up for me another time. An' 'tis well I know your Lordship 'ud be the last man on airth to give me the cowld shoulder, so you would, an' I an ould residenthur on your own father' s estate, the Lord be praised for that same! An' 'tis a happiness, an' nothin' else, so it is, even if I payed double rint—wherein, maybe, I'm not a day's journey from that same, manin' the double rint, yer honour; only that one would do a great deal for the honour an' glory of livin' undher a raal gintleman—an' that's but rason."

There is, in short, a far-sightedness in an Irishman which is not properly understood, because it is difficult to understand it. I do not think there is a nation

on earth, whose inhabitants mix up their interest and their feelings together more happily, shrewdly, and yet less ostensibly, than Irishmen contrive to do. An Irishman will make you laugh at his joke, while the object of that joke is wrapped up from you in the profoundest mystery, and you will consequently make the concession to a certain point of his character, which has been really obtained by a faculty you had not penetration to discover, or, rather, which he had too much sagacity to exhibit. Of course, as soon as your back is turned, the broad grin is on him, and one of his cheeks is stuck out two inches beyond the other, because his tongue is in it—at your stupidity, simplicity, or folly. Of all the characters of all the people of all the nations on this habitable globe, I verily believe that that of the Irish is the most profound and unfathomable; and the most difficult on which to form a system, either social, moral, or religious. The only power equal to grapple with it, is that of the Church of Rome, and certainly that lays Paddy in the dust; there he is over-reached, and *bammed*, and blarnied, and made to knock under.

It would be difficult, for example, to produce a more signal instance of energy, system, and perseverance than that exhibited in Ireland during the struggle for Emancipation. Was there not flattery to the dust? blarney to the eyes? heads broken? throats cut? houses burned? and cattle houghed? And why? Was it for the *mere pleasure* of blarney—of breaking heads, (I won't dispute the last point, though, because I scorn to give up the glory of the national character,)—of cutting throats—burning houses—or

houghing cattle? No; but to secure Emancipation. In attaining that object was exemplified the Irish method of gaining a point.

"Yes," said Jemmy, "to the divil I pitch slavery! I will come home able to rise yees from your poverty, or never show my face in the parish of Ballysogarth agin."

When the lad's determination was mentioned to his mother and the family, there was a loud and serious outcry against it: for no circumstance is relished that ever takes away a member from an Irish hearth, no matter what the nature of that circumstance may be.

"Och, thin, is it for that *bocaun** of a boy to set off wid himself, runnin' through the wide world afther larnin', widout money or friends! Avourneen, put it out of yer head. No; struggle on as the rest of us is doin', an' maybe ye'll come as well off at the long run."

"Mother dear," said the son, "I wouldn't wish to go agin what you'd say; but I made a promise to myself to *rise* yees out of your poverty if I can, an' my mind's made up on it; so don't cross me, or be the manes of my havin' bad luck on my journey, in regard of me goin' aginst yer will, when you know 'twould be the last thing I'd wish to do."

"Let the gossoon take his way, Vara. Who knows but it was the Almighty put the thoughts of it into his head. Pasthorini says that there will soon be a change, an' 'tis a good skame, it'ill be to have him a *sogarth* when the fat livins will be walkin' back to their ould owners."

* Soft, innocent person.

" Oh, an' may the Man above grant *that*, I pray Jamini this day! for aren't we harrished out of our lives, scrapin' an' scramblin' for the black thieves, what we ought to put on our backs, an' into our own mouths. Well, they say it's not lucky to take money from a priest, because it's the price o' sin, an' no more it can, seein' that they want it themselves; but I'm sure it's *their** money that *ought* to carry the bad luck to them, in regard of their gettin' so many bitther curses along wid it."

When a lad from the humblest classes resolves to go to Munster as a poor scholar, there is but one course to be pursued in preparing his outfit. This is by a collection at the chapel among the parishioners, to whom the matter is made known by the priest, from the altar, some Sunday previous to his departure. Accordingly when the family had all given their consent to Jemmy's project, his father went, on the following day, to communicate the matter to the priest, and to solicit his co-operation in " questing," or making a collection in behalf of the lad, on the next Sunday but one: for there is always a week's notice given, and sometimes more, that the people may come prepared.

The conversation already detailed between father and son took place on Friday, and on Saturday, a day on which the priest never holds a station, and, of course, is generally at home, Dominick M'Evoy went to his house with the object already specified in view. The priest was at home; a truly benevolent man, but like the worthies of his day, not overwhelmed with

* The Protestant clergy.

learning, though brimful of kindness and hospitality mixed up with drollery and simple cunning.

"Good morrow, Dominick!" said the priest, as Dominick entered.

"Good morrow kindly, Sir," replied Dominick: "I hope your Reverence is well, *and* in good health."

"Throth I am, Dominick! I hope there's nothing wrong at home; how is the wife and childhre?"

"I humbly thank your Reverence for axin'! Throth there's no rason for complainin' in regard o' the health; sarra one o' them but's bravely, consitherin' all things: I blieve I'm the worst o' them myself, yer Reverence. I'm gettin' ould, you see, an' stiff, an' wake; but that's only in the coorse o' nathur; a man can't last always. Wait till them that's young an' hearty *now*, harrows as much as I ploughed in my day, an' they won't have much to brag of. Why, thin, but yer Reverence stands it bravely—faix, wondherfully itself—the Lord be praised! an' it warms my own heart to see you look so well."

"Thank you, Dominick. Indeed, my health, God be thanked, is very good. Ellish," he added, calling to an old female servant—"you'll take a glass, Dominick, the day is cowldish—Ellish, here take the kay, and get some spirits—the *poteen*, Ellish—to the right hand in the cupboard. Indeed, my health is very good, Dominick. Father Murray says he invies me my appetite, an' I tell him he's guilty of one of the Seven deadly sins."

"Ha, ha, ha!—Faix, an' Invy *is* one o' them sure enough; but a joke is a joke in the mane time. A

pleasant gintleman is the same Father Murray, but yer Reverence is too deep for him in the jokin' line, for all that. Ethen, Sir, but it's you that gave ould Cokely the keen cut about his religion—ha, ha, ha! Myself laughed till I was sick for two days afther it —the ould thief!"

"Eh?—Did you hear that, Dominick? Are you sure that's the poteen, Ellish? Ay, an' the best of it all was, that his pathrun, Lord Foxhunter, was present. Come, Dominick, try that—it never seen wather. But the best of it all was—

—" ' Well, Father Kavanagh,' said he, ' who put you into the church? Now,' said he, ' you'll come over me wid your regular succession from St. Peter, but I won't allow that.'

" ' Why, Mr. Cokely,' says I, back to him, ' I'll give up the succession;' says I, ' and what is more, I'll grant that *you* have been *called* by the Lord, and that *I* have *not;* but the Lord that called you,' says I, ' was *Lord Foxhunter.*' Man, you'd tie his Lordship *wid* a cobweb, he laughed so heartily."

" ' Bravo, Father Kavanagh,' said he. ' Cokely, you're *bate,*' said he; ' and upon my honour, you must both dine with me to-day,' says he—and capital claret he keeps."

" Your health, Father Kavanagh, an' God spare you to us! Hah! wather! Oh, the divil a taste itself did the same stuff *see!* Why, thin, I think your Reverence an' me's about an age. I bleeve I'm a thrifle ouldher; but I don't bear it so well as you do. The family, you see, an' the childhre, an' the cares o' the world, pull me down: throth, the same family's a

throuble to me. I wish I had them all settled safe, any way."

"What do you intind to do wid them, Dominick?"

"In throth, that's what brought me to yer Reverence. I've one boy—Jimmy—a smart chap entirely, an' he has taken it into his head to go as a poor scholar to Munster. He's fond o' the larnin', there's not a doubt o' that, an' small blame to him to be sure; but then again, what can I do? He's bint on goin', an' I'm not able to help him, poor fellow, in any shape; so I made bould to see yer Reverence about it, in hopes that you might be able to plan out something for him more betther nor I could do. I have the good wishes of the neighbours, and indeed of the whole parish, let the thing go as it may."

"I know that, Dominick, and for the same rason we'll have a 'Quest'* at the three althars. I'll mintion it to them after Mass to-morrow, and let them be prepared for Sunday week, when you can make the collection. Hut, man, never fear; we'll get as much as will send him halfway to the priesthood; and I'll tell you what, Dominick, I'll never be the man to refuse giving him a couple of guineas myself."

"May the heavenly Father bless an' keep your Reverence! I'm sure 'tis a good right the boy has, as well as all of us, to never forget your kindness. But as to the money—he'll be proud of your assistance the other way, Sir—so not a penny—'tis only your good will we want—hem—except indeed, that you'd wish yourself to make a piece of kindness of it to the

* A charitable collection.

poor boy. Oh, not a drop more, Sir—I declare it'll be apt to get into my head. Well, well—sure an' we're not to disobey our clargy, whether or not: so here's your health over agin, your Reverence! an' success to the poor child that's bint on good!"

"Two guineas his Reverence is to give you from himself, Jimmy," said the father, on relating the success of this interview with the priest; an' faix I was widin one of refusin' it, for feard it might bring something *unlucky** wid it: but thought I, on the spur, it's best to take it, any way. We can asily put it off on some o' these black-mouthed Presbytarians or Orangemen, by way of changin' it, an' if there's any hard fortune in it, let them have the full benefit of it, *ershi misha.*"†

It is by trifles of this nature that the invincible and enduring hatred with which the religious sects of Ireland detest those of a different creed is best known. This feeling, however, is sufficiently mutual. Yet on both sides there is something more speculative than practical in its nature. When they speak of each other as a distinct class, the animosity, though abstracted, appears to be most deep; but when they mingle in the necessary intercourse of life, it is curious to see them frequently descend, on both sides, from the general rule to those exceptions of good will and kindness, which natural benevolence and mutual obligation, together with a correct knowledge

* There is a superstitious belief in some parts of Ireland, that priest's money is unlucky; "because," say the people, "it is the price of sin"—alluding to absolution.

† Say I.

of each other's real characters, frequently produce. This abstracted hatred has been generally the curse of our unhappy country; it has kept us too much asunder, or when we met, exhibited us to each other in our darkest and most irritating aspects.

Dominick's conduct in the matter of the priest's money, was also a happy illustration of that mixture of simplicity and shrewdness with which an Irishman can frequently make points meet, which superstition, alone, without ingenuity, would keep separate for ever. Many another man might have refused the money from an ignorant dread of its proving *unlucky;* but his mode of reasoning on the subject was satisfactory to himself, and certainly the most ingenious which, according to his belief, he could have adopted.

The eloquence of a country priest, though rude, and by no means elevated, is sometimes well adapted to the end in view, to the feelings of his auditory, and to the nature of the subject on which he speaks. Pathos and humour are the two levers by which the Irish character is raised or depressed; and these are blended in a manner too anomalous to be ever properly described. Whoever could be present at a sermon on the Sunday when a Purgatorian Society is to be established, would hear pathos and see grief of the first water. It is then he would get a "nate" and glowing description of Purgatory, and see the broad, humorous, Milesian faces, of three or four thousand persons of both sexes, shaped into an expression of the most grotesque and clamorous grief. The priest, however, on particular occasions of this

nature, very shrewdly gives notice of the sermon, and of the purpose for which it is to be preached:—if it be grave, the people are prepared to cry; but if it be for a political, or any other purpose not decidedly religious, there will be abundance of that rough, blunt satire and mirth, so keenly relished by the peasantry, illustrated, too, by the most comical and ridiculous allusions. That priest, indeed, who is the best master of this latter faculty is uniformly the greatest favourite. It is no unfrequent thing to see the majority of an Irish congregation drowned in sorrow and tears, even when they are utterly ignorant of the language spoken; particularly in those districts where the Irish is still the vernacular tongue. This is what renders notice of the sermon and its purport necessary; otherwise the honest people might be seriously at a loss whether to laugh or cry.

"*Ellish, avourneen, qho dhe dirsha?*"—Ellish, my dear, what is he saying?"

"*Och, musha niel eshighum, ahagur—ta sha er Purgathor, ta barlhum.*"—Och, I dunna that, jewel; I blieve he's on Purgatory."

"*Och, och, oh—och, och, oh—oh, i, oh, i, oh!*"

And on understanding that Purgatory is the subject, they commence their grief with a rocking motion, wringing their hands, and unconsciously passing their beads through their fingers, whilst their bodies are bent forward towards the earth.

On the contrary, when the priest gets jocular—which I should have premised, he never does in what is announced as a solemn sermon—you might observe several faces charged with mirth and laughter, turned,

even while beaming with this expression, to those who kneel beside them, inquiring:

"Arrah, Barny, what is it—ha, ha, ha!—what is it he's sayin'? The Lord spare him among us, any how, the darlin' of a man! Eh, Barny, you that's in the inside the English?"

Barny, however, is generally too much absorbed in the fun to become interpreter just then; but as soon as the joke is nearly heard out, in compliance with the importunity of his neighbours, he gives them a brief hint or two, and instantly the full chorus is rung out, long, loud, and jocular.

On the Sunday in question, as the subject could not be called strictly religious, the priest, who knew that a joke or two would bring in many an additional crown to Jemmy's *caubeen*, was determined that they should at least have a laugh for their money. The man, besides, was benevolent, and knew the way to the Irish heart; a knowledge which he felt happy in turning to the benefit of the lad in question.

With this object in view, he addressed the people somewhat in the following language:

"*Blessed is he that giveth his money to him that standeth in need of it.*

"These words, my brethren, are taken from St. Paul, who, among ourselves, knew the value of a friend in distress as well as any other apostle in the three kingdoms—hem. It's a nate text, my friends, any how. He manes, however, when we have it to give, my own true, well-tried, ould friends!—when we have it to give. Its absence althers the case, in toto; because you have all heard the proverb—'there

is no takin' money out of an empty purse;' or, as an ould ancient author said long ago upon the same subject:

'Cantabit whackuus coram lathrone whiathur!'

—(Dshk, dshk, dshk*—that's the larnin'!)—He that carries an empty purse may whistle at the thief. It's *sing* in the Latin; but sing or whistle, in my opinion, he that goes wid an empty purse seldom sings or whistles to a pleasant tune. Melancholy music I'd call it, an' wouldn't, may be, much astray afther.—Hem. At all evints, may none of this present congregation, whin at their devotions, ever sing or whistle to the same tune! No; let it be to 'money in both pockets,' if you sing at all; and as long as you have that, never fear but you'll also have the 'priest in his boots' into the bargain—("Ha, ha, ha!—God bless him, isn't he the pleasant gintleman, all out—ha, ha, ha!—moreover, an' by the same a token, it's thrue as Gospel, so it is,")—for well I know that you're the high-spirited people, who wouldn't see your priest without them, while a fat parson, with half-a-dozen chins upon him, red and rosy, goes about every day in the week bogged in boots, like a horse trooper!—("Ha, ha, ha!—good, Father Dan! More power to you—ha, ha, ha! We're the boys that wouldn't see you in want o' them, sure enough. Isn't he the droll crathur?")

"But suppose a man hasn't money, what is he to

*This sound, which expresses wonder, is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate.

do? Now this divides itself into what is called Hydrostatics an' Metaphysics, and must be proved logically in the following manner:

"First, we suppose him *not* to have the money—there I may be wrong or I may be right; now for the illustration and the logic.

"Pether Donovan."

"Here, your Reverence."

"Now, Pether, if I suppose you to have *no* money, am I right, or am I wrong?"

"Why, thin, I'd be sarry to prove your Reverence to be wrong, so I would; but for all that, I believe I must give it aginst you."

"How much have you got, Pether?"

"Ethen, but 'tis yer Reverence that's comin' close upon me: two or three small notes an' some silver."

"How much silver, Pether?"

"I'll tell your Reverence in a jiffy. I ought to have a ten shillin', barrin' the price of a quarther o' tobaccy that I bought at the crass-roads beyant. Nine shillins an' some hapuns, yer Reverence."

"Very good, Pether, you must hand me the silver, till I give the rest of the illustration wid it."

"But does yer Reverence mind another ould proverb?—'a fool an' his money's asy parted.' Sure an' I know you're goin' to do a joke upon me."

("Give him the money, Pether," from a hundred voices—"give his Reverence the money, you nager you—give him the silver, you dirty spalpeen you—hand it out, you misert.")

"Pether, if you don't give it dacently, I'll not take it; and in that case"—

"Here, here, your Reverence—here it is: sure I wouldn't have your ill-will for all I'm worth."

"Why, you nager, if I wasn't the first orathor livin', barrin' Cicero or Demosthenes himself, I couldn't *schrew* a penny out o' you! Now, Pether, there's a specimen of logic for you; an' if it wasn't good, depind upon it the money would be in your pocket still. I've never known you to give a penny for any charitable purpose, since ever I saw your face: but I'm doin' a good action in your behalf for once; so if you have any movin' words to say to the money in question, say them, for you'll never finger it more."

A burst of the most uproarious mirth followed this manœuvre, in which the simple priest himself joined heartily; whilst the melancholy of Peter's face was ludicrously contrasted with the glee which characterised those that surrounded him.

"Hem!—Secondly—A man, you see, may have money, or he may not, when his fellow-creature who stands in need of it makes an appale to his dacency and his feelings; and sorry I'd be to think that there's a man before me, or a woman either, who'd refuse to assist the distresses of any one, of any creed, church, or persuasion, whether white, black, or yallow. It's what I never taught you, nor never will tache you to the day of my death! To be sure, a fellow-creature may say, 'help me, my brother, I am distressed,' or, 'I am bent on a good purpose, that your kindness can enable me to accomplish.' But suppose that you have not the money *about you at the time*, wouldn't you feel sorry to the back-bone?

Ay, would yees—to the very core of the heart itself. Or if any man—an' he'd be nothing else than a *bodagh* that would say it—if any man would tell me that you would not, I'd—yes—I'd give him his answer, as good as I gave to ould Cokely long ago.

"The next point is, what would you do if you hadn't it about you? It's I that can tell you what you'd do:—you'd say, 'I haven't got it, brother,'—for ev'ry created bein' of the human kind is your brother, barrin' the women, an' they are your sisters—[this produced a grin upon many faces]—'but,' says you, 'if you wait for a day or two, or a week, or maybe for a fortnight, I'll try what I can do to help you.'

"Picture to yourselves a fellow-creature in distress—suppose him to have neither hat, shoe, nor stocking—[this was a touch of the pathetic]—and altogether in a state of utter destitution! Can there be a more melancholy picture than this? No, there can't. But 'tisn't the tithe of it!—a barefaced robbery is the same tithe—think of him without father, mother, or friend upon the earth—maybe he has poor health—maybe he's sick, an' in a sthrange country—[here Jemmy's mother and friends sobbed aloud, and the contagion began to spread—the priest, in fact, knew where to touch]—his face is pale—his eyes sunk with sickness and sorrow in his head—his bones are cuttin' the skin—he knows not where to turn himself—hunger and sickness are strivin' for him.—[Here the grief became loud and general, and even the good-natured preacher's own voice got somewhat unsteady.]—He's in a bad state entirely

—miserable! more miserable!! most miserable!!! [och, och, oh!] sick, sore, and sorry!—he's to be pitied, felt for, and compassionated! — [a general outcry]—'tis a faver he has, or an ague, maybe, or a rheumatism, or an embargo* on the limbs, or the king's evil, or a consumption, or a decline, or God knows but it's the falling-sickness—[och, och, oh! —och, och, oh! from the whole congregation, whilst the simple old man's eyes were blinded with tears at the force of the picture he drew.]—Ay, maybe it's the *falling*-sickness, and in that case how on earth can he *stand* it.—[He can't, he can't, wurra strew, wurra strew!—och, och, oh!—ogh, ogh, ogh!]—The Lord in heaven look down upon him—[amin, amin, this blessed an' holy Sunday that's in it!—och, oh!]—pity him—[amin, amin!—och, och, an' amin'!]—with miseracordial feeling and benediction! He hasn't a rap in his company!—moneyless, friendless, houseless, an' homeless! Ay, my friends, you all have homes—but *he* has none! Thrust back by every hard-hearted spalpeen, and he, maybe, a better father's son than the Turk that refuses him! Look at your own childhre, my friends! Bring the case home to yourselves! Suppose he was one of them—alone on the earth, and none to pity him in his sorrows!—Your own childhre, I say, in a strange land! —[Here the outcry became astounding—men, women, and children in one general uproar of grief.] —An' this may all be Jemmy M'Evoy's case, that's going in a week or two to Munster, as a poor scholar —may be his case, I say, except you befriend him,

* Lumbago, we presume.

and show your *dacency* and your *feelings*, like Christians and Catholics; and for either dacency or kindness, I'd turn yees against any other congregation in the diocess, or in the kingdom—ay, or against Dublin itself, if it was convanient."

Now here was a *coup de main*—not a syllable mentioned about Jemmy M'Evoy, until he had melted them down, ready for the impression, which he accordingly made to his heart's content.

"Ay," he went on, "an' 'tis the parish of Ballysogarth that has the name, far and near, for *both*, and well they desarve it. You won't see the poor gorsoon go to a sthrange country with empty pockets. He's the son of an honest man—one of yourselves; and although he's a poor man, you know 'twas Yallow Sam that made him so—that put him out of his comfortable farm and slipped a *blackmouth* into it. You won't turn your backs on the son in regard of *that*, any way. As for Sam, let *him* pass; he'll not grind the poor nor truckle to the rich, when he gives up his stewardship in the kingdom come. Lave him to the friend of the poor—to his God; but the son of them that he oppressed, you will stand up for. He's going to Munster, to learn 'to go upon the Missior;' and, on Sunday next, there will be a collection made here, and at the other two althars for him; and, as your own characters are at stake, I trust it will be neither mane nor shabby. There will be Protestants here, I'll engage, and you must act dacently before them, if it was only to set them a good example. And now I'll tell yees a story that the mintion of the Protestants brings to my mind:—

" There was, you see, a Protestant man and a Catholic woman once married together. The man was a swearing, drinking, wicked rascal, and his wife the same: between them they were a blessed pair to be sure. She never bent her knee under a priest until she was on her death-bed; nor was he known ever to enter a church door, nor to give a shilling in charity but once, that being as follows:—He was passing a Catholic place of worship one Sunday, on his way to fowl—for he had his dog and gun with him;—'twas beside a road, and many of the congregation were kneeling out across the way. Just as he passed they were making a collection for a poor scholar—and surely they that love the larning desarve to be encouraged! Well, behold you—says one of them, 'will you remember the poor scholar,' says he, 'and put something in the hat? You don't know,' says he, 'but his prayers will be before you,'* 'True enough, maybe,' says the man, 'and there's a crown to him, for God's sake.' Well and good—the man died, and so did the wife: but the very day before her departure, she got a Scapular, and died in it. She had one sister, however, a good crature, that did nothing but fast and pray, and make her sowl. This woman had strong doubts upon her mind, and was very much troubled as to whether or not her sister went to heaven; and she begged it as a favour from the blessed Virgin, that the state of her sister's sowl might be revaled to her. Her prayer was granted. One night, about a week after her death, her sister

* In the other world.

came back to her, dressed all in white, and circled round by a veil of glory :—

" ' Is that Mary ?' said the living sister.

" ' It is,' said the other ; ' I have got liberty to appear to you,' says she, ' and to tell you that I'm happy.'

" ' May the holy Virgin be praised !' said the other. ' Mary dear, you have taken a great weight off of me,' says she : ' I thought you'd have a bad chance, in regard of the life you led.'

" ' When I died,' said the spirit, ' and was on my way to the other world, I came to a place where the road divided itself into three parts ;—one to heaven, another to hell, and a third to purgatory. There was a dark gulf between me and heaven, and a breach between me and purgatory that I couldn't step across, and if I had missed my foot there, I would have dropped into hell. So I would, too, only that the blessed Virgin put my own scapular over the breach, and it became firm, and I stepped on it, and got over. The Virgin then desired me to look into hell, and the first person I saw was my own husband, standing with a green sod under his feet ! " He got that favour," said the blessed Virgin, " in consequence of the prayers of a holy priest, that had once been a poor scholar, that he gave assistance to, at a collection made for him in such a chapel," says she. Then,' continued the sowl, ' Mary,' says she, ' but there's some great change in the world since I died, or why would the people live so long? It can't be less than six thousand years since I departed, and yet I find every one of my friends just as I left them.'

"'Why,' replied the living sister, 'you're only six days dead.'

"'Ah, avourneen!' said the other, 'it can't be—it can't be! for I have been thousands on thousands of years in pain!'—and as she spoke this she disappeared.

"Now there's a *proof* of the pains of purgatory, where one day seems as long as a thousand years; and you know we oughten't to grudge a thrifle to a fellow-crature, that we may avoid it. So you see, my friends, there's nothing like good works. You know not when or where this lad's prayers may benefit you. If he gets ordained, the first Mass he says will be for his benefactors; and in every one he celebrates after that, they must also be remembered: the words are —*pro omnibus benefactoribus meis, per omnia secula seculorum!*

"Thirdly—hem—I now lave the thing to yourselves.

"But wasn't I a match for Pether Donovan, that would brake a stone for the marrow*—Eh?—(a broad laugh at Pether's rueful visage.)—Pether, you Turk, will your heart never soften—will you never have dacency, an' you the only man of your family that's so? Sure they say you're going to be marrid some of these days. Well, if you get your wife in my parish, I tell you, Pether, I'll give you a fleecin', for don't think I'll marry you as chape as I would a poor honest man. I'll make you shell out the yallow boys, and 'tis that will go to your heart, you nager you; and then I'll eat you out of house and home at

* See note B.

the Stations. May the Lord grant us, in the mane time, a dacent appetite, a blessing which I wish you all in the name of the —— &c."

At this moment the congregation was once more in convulsions of laughter at the dressing which Peter, whose character was drawn with much truth and humour, received at the hands of the worthy pastor.

Our readers will perceive that there was not a single prejudice, or weakness, or virtue, in the disposition of his auditory left untouched in this address. He moved their superstition, their pride of character, their dread of hell and purgatory, their detestation of yellow Sam, and the remembrance of the injury so wantonly inflicted on M'Evoy's family; he glanced at the advantage to be derived from the lad's prayers, the example they should set to Protestants, made a passing hit at Tithes;—and indulged in the humorous, the pathetic, and the miraculous. In short, he left no avenue to their hearts untouched; and in the process by which he attempted to accomplish his object he was successful.

There is, in fact, much rude, unpolished eloquence among the Roman Catholic priesthood, and not a little which, if duly cultivated by study and a more liberal education, would deserve to be ranked very high.

We do not give this as a specimen of their *modern* pulpit eloquence, but as a sample of that in which some of those Irish clergy shone, who, before the establishment of Maynooth, were admitted to orders immediately from the hedge-schools, in consequence

of the dearth of priests which then existed in Ireland. It was customary in those days to ordain them even before they departed for the continental colleges, in order that they might, by saying masses and performing other clerical duties, be enabled to add something to the scanty pittance which was appropriated to their support. Of the class to which Father Kavanagh belonged, there are few, if any, remaining. They sometimes were called "Hedge-priests,"* by way of reproach; though, for our own parts, we wish their non-interference in politics, unaffected piety, and simplicity of character, had remained behind them.

On the Sunday following, Dominick M'Evoy and his son Jemmy attended mass, whilst the other members of the family, with that sense of honest pride which is more strongly inherent in Irish character than is generally supposed, remained at home, from a reluctance to witness what they could not but consider a degradation. This decency of feeling was anticipated by the priest, and not overlooked by the people; for the former, the reader may have observed, in the whole course of his address never once mentioned the word "charity;" nor did the latter permit the circumstance to go without its reward, according to the best of their ability. So keen and delicate are the perceptions of the Irish, and so acutely alive are they to those nice distinctions of kindness and courtesy, which have in their hearts a spontaneous and sturdy

* This nickname was first bestowed upon them by the continental priests, who generally ridiculed them for their vulgarity. They were, for the most part, simple but worthy men.

growth, that mocks at the stunted virtues of artificial life.

In the parish of Ballysogarth there were three altars, or places of Roman Catholic worship; and the reader may suppose that the collection made at each place was considerable. In truth, both father and son's anticipations were far under the sum collected. Protestants and Presbyterians attended with their contributions, and those of the latter who scrupled to be present at what they considered to be an idolatrous worship, did not hesitate to *send* their quota by some Roman Catholic neighbour. Their names were accordingly announced with an encomium from the priest, which never failed to excite a warm-hearted murmur of approbation. Nor was this feeling transient; for we will venture to say, that had political excitement flamed up even to rebellion, and mutual slaughter, the persons and property of *those* individuals would have been held sacred.

At length Jemmy was equipped; and sad and heavy became the hearts of his parents and immediate relations as the morning appointed for his departure drew nigh. On the evening before, several of his more distant relatives came to take their farewell of him, and, in compliance with the usages of Irish hospitality, they were detained for the night. They did not, however, come empty-handed: some brought money; some brought linen, stockings, or small presents—"jist, Jimmy asthore, to keep *me* in yer memory, sure—an' nothin' else it is for, mavourneen."

Except Jemmy himself, and one of his brothers, who was to accompany him part of the way, none of

the family slept. The mother exhibited deep sorrow, and Dominick, although he made a show of firmness, felt, now that the crisis was at hand, nearly incapable of parting with the boy. The conversation of their friends, and the cheering effects of the poteen, enabled them to sustain his loss better than they otherwise would have done, and the hope of seeing him one day "an ordained priest," contributed more than either to support them.

When the night was nearly half spent, the mother took a candle and privately withdrew to the room in which the boy slept. The youth was fair, and interesting to look upon—the clustering locks of his white forehead were divided; yet there was on his otherwise open brow a shade of sorrow, produced by the coming separation, which even sleep could not efface. The mother held the candle gently towards his face, shading it with one hand, lest the light might suddenly awake him; she then surveyed his features long and affectionately, whilst the tears fell in showers from her cheeks.

"There you lie," she softly sobbed out in Irish, "the sweet pulse of your mother's heart, the flower of our flock, the pride of our eyes, and the music of our hearth! Jimmy, avourneen machree, an' how can I part wid you, my darlin' son! Sure when I look at your mild face, and think that you're takin' the world on your head to *rise* us out of our poverty, isn't my heart brakin'! A lonely house we'll have afther you, acushla! Goin' out an' comin' in, at home or abroad, your voice won't be in my ears, nor your eye smilin' upon me! An' thin to think of what you may suffer

in a sthrange land! If your head aches, on what tendher breast will it lie? or who will bind the ribbon of comfort* round it? or wipe your fair mild brow in sickness? Oh Blessed Mother, hunger, sickness, and sorrow, may come upon you, *when you'll be far from your own, an' from them that loves you!*"

This melancholy picture was too much for the tenderness of the mother; she sat down beside the bed, rested her face on her open hand, and wept in subdued but bitter grief. At this moment his father, who probably suspected the cause of her absence, came in, and perceived her distress.

"Vara," said he, in Irish also, "is my darlin' son asleep?"

She looked up with streaming eyes as he spoke, and replied to him with difficulty, whilst she involuntarily held over the candle to gratify the father's heart by a sight of him.

"I was keepin' him before my eye," she said; "God knows but it may be the last night we'll ever see him undher our own roof! Dominick, achora, I doubt I can't part wid him from my heart."

"Then how can I, Vara?" he replied. "Wasn't he my right hand in every thing? When was he from me, ever since he took a man's work upon him? And when he'd finish his own task for the day, how kindly he'd begin an' help me wid mine! No, Vara, it goes to my heart to let him go away upon sich a

* This alludes to a charm performed by certain persons, which, by means of a ribbon, is said to cure head-aches in Ireland. It is called "measuring the head."

plan, an' I wish he hadn't taken the notion into his head at all."

"It's not too late, maybe," replied his mother. "I think it wouldn't be hard to put him off of it; the crathur's own heart's failin' him to lave us—he has sorrow upon his face, where he lies."

The father looked at the expression of affectionate melancholy which shaded his features as he slept; and the perception of the boy's internal struggle against his own domestic attachments in accomplishing his first determination, powerfully touched his heart.

"Vara," said he, "I know the boy—he won't give it up; and 'twould be a pity—maybe a sin—to put him from it. Let the child get fair play, an' thry his coorse. If he fails, he can come back to us, an' our arms an' hearts will be open to welcome him! But if God prospers him, wouldn't it be a blessin' that we never expected, to see him in the white robes, celebratin' one mass for his paarents. If these ould eyes could see that, I would be contínted to close them in pace an' happiness for ever."

"An' well you'd become them, avourneen machree! Well would your mild and handsome countenance look wid the long heavenly stole of innocence upon you! and although it's atin' into my heart, I'll bear it for the sake of seein' the same blessed sight. Look at that face, Dominick; mightn't many a lord of the land be proud to have sich a son? May the heavens shower down its blessin' upon him!"

The father burst into tears. "It is—it is!" said he. "It is the face that 'ud make many a noble

heart proud to look at it! Is it any wondher it 'ud cut *our* hearts, thin, to have it taken from afore our eyes? Come away, Vara—come away, or I'll not be able to part wid it. It *is* the lovely face—an' kind is the heart of my darlin' child!" As he spoke, he stooped down and kissed the youth's cheek, on which the warm tears of affection fell soft as the dew from heaven. The mother followed his example, and they both left the room.

"We must bear it," said Dominick, as they passed into another apartment; "the money's gathered, an' it wouldn't look well to be goin' back wid it to them that befrinded us. *We'd* have the blush upon our face for it, an' the child no advantage."

"Thrue for you, Dominick; and we must make up our minds to live widout him for a while."

The following morning was dark and cloudy, but calm and without rain. When the family were all assembled, every member of it evinced traces of deep feeling, and every eye was fixed upon the serene but melancholy countenance of the boy with tenderness and sorrow. He himself maintained a quiet equanimity, which, though apparently liable to be broken by the struggles of domestic affection, and in character with his meek and unassuming disposition, yet was supported by more firmness than might be expected from a mind in which kindness and sensibility were so strongly predominant. At this time, however, his character was not developed, or at least not understood, by those that surrounded him. To strong feelings and enduring affections, he added a keenness of perception and a bitterness of invective, of which, in

his conversation with his father concerning yellow Sam, the reader has already had sufficient proofs. At breakfast little or nothing was eaten; the boy himself could not taste a morsel, nor any other person in the family. When the form of the meal was over, the father knelt down—" It's right," said he, " that we should all go to our knees, and join in a Rosary in behalf of the child that's goin' on a good intintion. He won't thrive the worse bekase the last words that he'll hear from his father and mother's lips is a prayer for bringin' the blessin' of God down upon his enday-vours."

This was accordingly performed, though not without tears and sobs, and frequent demonstrations of grief; for religion among the peasantry is often associated with bursts of deep and powerful feeling.

When the prayer was over, the boy rose and calmly strapped to his back a satchel covered with deer-skin, containing a few books, linen, and a change of very plain apparel. While engaged in this, the uproar of grief in the house was perfectly heart-rending. When just ready to set out, he reverently took off his hat, knelt down, and with tears streaming from his eyes, craved humbly and meekly the blessing and forgiveness of his father and mother. The mother caught him in her arms, kissed his lips, and kneeling also, sobbed out a fervent benediction upon his head; the father now, in the grief of a strong man, pressed him to his heart, until the big burning tears fell upon the boy's face; his brothers and sisters embraced him wildly; next his more distant relations; and lastly, the neighbours who were crowded about the door.

After this he took a light staff in his hand, and, first blessing himself after the form of his church, proceeded to a strange land in quest of education.

He had not gone more than a few perches from the door, when his mother followed him with a small bottle of holy water. "Jimmy, *a lanna voght*,"* said she, "here's this, an' carry it about you—it will keep evil from you; an' be sure to take good care of the written correckther you got from the priest an' Square Benson; an', darlin', don't be lookin' too often at the cuff o' your coat, for feard the people might get a notion that you have the bank-notes sewed in it. An', Jimmy agra, don't be too lavish upon their Munster crame, they say it's apt to give people the ague. Kiss me agin, agra; an' the heavens above keep you safe and well till we see you once more!"

She then tenderly, and still with melancholy pride, settled his shirt collar, which she thought did not sit well about his neck: and kissing him again, with renewed sorrow left him to pursue his journey.

M'Evoy's house was situated on the side of a dark hill—one of that barren description which can be called neither inland nor mountain. It commanded a wide and extended prospect, and the road along which the lad travelled was visible for a considerable distance from it. On a small hillock before the door, sat Dominick and his wife, who, as long as their son was visible, kept their eyes, which were nearly blinded with tears, rivetted upon his person. It was now they gave full vent to their grief, and discussed with painful and melancholy satisfaction, all the excellent qua-

* My poor child.

lities which he possessed. As James himself advanced, one neighbour after another fell away from the train which accompanied him, not, however, until they had affectionately embraced and bid him adieu, and, perhaps, slipped with peculiar delicacy an additional mite into his waistcoat pocket. After the neighbours, then followed the gradual separation from his friends—one by one left him, as in the great journey of life, and in a few hours he found himself accompanied only by his favourite brother.

This to him was the greatest trial he had yet felt; long and heart-rending was their embrace. Jemmy soothed and comforted his beloved brother, but in vain. The lad threw himself on the spot at which they parted, and remained there until Jemmy turned an angle of the road which brought him out of his sight, when the poor boy kissed the marks of his brother's feet repeatedly, and then returned home, hoarse and broken down with the violence of his grief.

He was now alone, and for the first time, felt keenly the strange object on which he was bent, together with all the difficulties connected with its attainment. He was young and uneducated, and many years, he knew, must elapse e'er he could find himself in possession of his wishes. But time would pass at home, as well as abroad, he thought; and as there lay no impediment of peculiar difficulty in his way, he collected all his firmness and proceeded.

There is no country on the earth in which either education, or the desire to procure it, is so much reverenced as in Ireland. Next to the claims of the priest and schoolmaster come those of the poor scholar

for the respect of the people. It matters not how poor or how miserable he may be; so long as they see him struggling with poverty in the prosecution of a purpose so laudable, they will treat him with attention and kindness. Here there is no danger of his being sent to the workhouse, committed as a vagrant —or passed from parish to parish, until he reaches his own settlement. Here the humble lad is not met by the sneer of purse-proud insolence, or his simple tale answered only by the frown of heartless contempt. No—no—no. The best bit and sup are placed before him; and whilst his poor, but warm-hearted entertainer can afford only potatoes and salt to his own half-starved family, he will make a struggle to procure something better for the poor scholar; "*Bekase he's far from his own, the crathur!* An' sure the intintion in him is good, any how; the Lord prosper him, an' every one that has the heart set upon the larnin'!"

As Jemmy proceeded, he found that his satchel of books and apparel gave as clear an intimation of his purpose, as if he had carried a label to that effect upon his back.

"God save you, a bouchal!" said a warm, honest-looking countryman, whom he met driving home his cows in the evening, within a few miles of the town in which he purposed to sleep.

"God save you kindly!"

"Why, thin, 'tis a long journey you have before you, alanna, for I know well it's for Munster you're bound."

"Thrue for you, 'tis there wid the help of God I'm

goin'. A great scarcity of larnin' was in my own place, or I wouldn't have to go at all," said the boy, whilst his eyes filled with tears.

"'Tis no discredit in life," replied the countryman, with untaught, natural delicacy, for he perceived that a sense of pride lingered about the boy, which made the character of poor scholar sit painfully upon him; "'tis no discredit, dear, nor don't be cast down. I'll warrant you that God will prosper you; an' that he may, avick, I pray this day!" and as he spoke, he raised his hat in reverence to the Being whom he invoked. "An' tell me, dear—where do you intend to sleep to-night?"

"In the town forrid here," replied Jemmy. "I'm in hopes I'll be able to reach it before dark."

"Pooh! asy you will. Have you any friends or acquaintances there that 'ud welcome you *a bouchal dhas* (my handsome boy)?"

"No, indeed," said Jemmy, "they're all strangers to me; but I can stop in 'dhry lodgin',' for it's chaper."

"Well, alanna, I believe you; but *I'm no stranger to you*—so come home wid me to-night; where you'll get a good bed, an' betther thratement nor in any of their dhry lodgins. Give me your books, an' I'll carry them for you. Ethen, but you have a great batch o' them entirely. Can you make any hand o' the Latin at all yet?"

"No, indeed," replied Jemmy, somewhat sorrowfully; "I didn't ever open a Latin book, at all at all."

"Well, acushla, every thing has a beginnin';—you won't be so. An' I know by your face that you'll be

bright at it, an' a credit to them that owes * you. There's my house in the fields beyant, where you'll be well kept for one night, any way, or for twinty, or for ten times twinty, if you wanted them."

The honest farmer then commenced the song of *Colleen dhas Crotha na Mho*,† which he sang in a clear mellow voice, until they reached the house.

"Alley," said the man to his wife, on entering, "here's a stranger I've brought you."

"Well," replied Alley, "he's welcome sure, any way; *Kead millia failta ghud*, alanna! sit over to the fire. Brian, get up, dear," said she to one of the children, "an' let the stranger to the hob."

"He's goin' on a good errand, the Lord bless him!" said the husband, "up the country for the larnin'. Put thim books over on the settle; an' whin the *girshas* are done milkin', give him a brave dhrink of the sweet milk; it's the stuff to thravel on."

"Throth, an' I will, wid a heart an' a half, wishin' it was betther I had to give him. Here, Nelly, put down a pot o' wather, an' lave soap an' a *praskeen*, afore you go to milk, till I bathe the dacent boy's feet. Sore an' tired they are afther his journey, poor young crathur."

When Jemmy placed himself upon the hob, he saw that some peculiarly good fortune had conducted him to so comfortable a resting-place. He considered this as a good omen, and felt, in fact, much relieved, for the sense of loneliness among strangers was removed.

The house evidently belonged to a wealthy farmer, well to do in the world; the chimney was studded

* Owns. † The pretty girl milking her cow.

with sides upon sides of yellow smoke-dried bacon, hams, and hung beef in abundance. The kitchen tables were large, and white as milk; and the dresser rich in its shining array of delf and pewter. Every thing, in fact, was upon a large scale. Huge meal chests were ranged on one side, and two or three settle beds on the other, conspicuous, as I have said, for their uncommon cleanliness; whilst hung from the ceiling were the *glaiks*, a machine for churning; and beside the dresser stood an immense churn, certainly too unwieldy to be managed except by machinery. The farmer was a ruddy-faced Milesian, who wore a drab frieze coat, with a velvet collar, buff waistcoat, corduroy small-clothes, and top-boots well greased from the tops down.* He was not only an agriculturist, but a grazier—remarkable for shrewdness and good sense, generally attended fairs and markets, and brought three or four large droves of fat cattle to England every year. From his fob hung the brass chain and almost rusty key of a watch, which he kept certainly more for use than ornament.

"A little sup o' this," said he, "won't take your life," approaching Jemmy with a bottle of as good poteen as ever escaped the eye of an exciseman; "it'll refresh you—for you're tired, or I wouldn't offer it, by rason that one bint on what you're bint on, oughtn't to be makin' freedoms wid the same dhrink. But there's a time for every thing, an' there's a time for this.——Thank you, agra," he added, in reply to Jemmy, who had drunk his health. "Now, don't be

* This, almost in every instance, is the dress of a wealthy Irish farmer.

frettin—but make yourself as aisy as if you were at your own father's hearth. You'll have every thing to your heart's contint for this night; the carts are goin' in to the market to-morrow arly—you can sit upon them, an' maybe you'll get somethin' more nor you expect: sure the Lord has given it to me, an' why wouldn't I share it wid them that wants it more nor I do?"

The lad's heart yearned to the generous farmer, for he felt that his kindness had the stamp of truth and sincerity upon it. He could only raise his eyes in a silent prayer, that none belonging to him might ever be compelled, as strangers and way-farers, to commit themselves, as he did, to the casualties of life, in pursuit of those attainments which poverty cannot otherwise command. Fervent, indeed, was his prayer; and certain we are, that because it was sincere, it must have been heard.

In the mean time, the good woman, or *vanithee*, had got the pot of water warmed, in which Jemmy was made to put his feet. She then stripped up her arms to the elbows, and, with soap and seedy meal, affectionately bathed his legs and feet: then, taking the praskeen, or coarse towel, she wiped them with a kindness which thrilled to his heart.

"And now," said she, "I must give you a cure for blisthers, an' it's this:—In the mornin', if we're all spared, as we will, plase the Almighty, I'll give you a needle an' some white woollen thread, well soaped. When your blisthers gets up, dhraw the soapy thread through them, clip it on each side, an', my life for yours, they won't throuble you. Sure I thried it the

year I went on my Station to Lough Derg, an' I know it to be the rale cure."

"Here, Nelly," said the farmer,—who sat with a placid benevolent face, smoking his pipe on the opposite hob—to one of the maids who came in from milking,—"bring up a noggin of that milk, we want it here: let it be none of your washy *foremilk*, but the *strippins*, Nelly, that has the strinth in it. Up wid it here, a colleen."

"The never a one o' the man but's doatin' downright, so he is," observed the wife, "to go to fill the tired child's stomach wid plash. Can't you wait till he ates a thrifle o' somethin' stout, to keep life in him, afther his hard journey? Does your feet feel themselves cool an' asy now, a hagur?"

"Indeed," said Jemmy, "I'm almost as fresh as when I set out. 'Twas little thought I had, when I came away this mornin', that I'd meet wid so much friendship on my journey. I hope it's a sign that God's on my side in my undertakin'!"

"I hope so, avourneen—I hope so, an' it is, too," replied the farmer, taking the pipe out of his mouth, and mildly whiffing away the smoke, "an' God 'll be always on your side, as long as your intentions are good. Now ate somethin'—you must want it by this; an' thin, when you rest yourself bravely, take a tass into a good feather-bed, where you can sleep rings round you.* Who knows but you'll be able to say mass for me or some o' my family yit. God grant that, any way, avick!"

Poor James's heart was too full to eat much; he

* As much as you please.

took, therefore, only a very slender portion of the refreshments set before him; but his hospitable entertainer had no notion of permitting him to use the free exercise of his discretion on this important point. When James put away the knife and fork, as an indication of his having concluded the meal, the farmer and his wife turned about, both at the same moment, with a kind of astonishment—

"Eh? is it givin' over that way you are? Why, a lanna, it's nothin' at all you've tuck; sure little Brian there would make a fool of you, so he would, at the atin'. Come, come, a bouchal—don't be ashamed, or make any way sthrange at all, but ate hearty."

"I declare I *have* ate heartily, thank you," replied James; "oceans itself, so I did. I couldn't swally a bit more if the house was full."

"Arrah, Brian," said the wife, "cut him up more o' that hung beef, it's ashamed the crathur is! Take it, avick; don't we know the journey you had? Faix, if one o' the boys was out on a day's thravellin', you'd see how he'd handle himself."

"Indeed," said James, "I can't—if I could I would. Sure I would be no way backward at all, so I wouldn't."

"Throth, an' you can an' must," said the farmer: "the never a rise you'll rise, till you finish that"—putting over a complement out of all reasonable proportion with his age and size.

"There now's a small taste, an' you must finish it. To go to ate nothin' at all Hut tut! by the

tops o' my boots, you must put that clear an' clane out o' sight, or I'll go mad an' burn them."

The lad recommenced, and continued to eat as long as he could possibly hold out; at length he ceased:—

"I can't go on," said he; "don't ax me—I can't indeed."

"Bad manners to the word I'll hear till you finish it: you know it's but a thrifle to spake of. Thry agin, avick, but take your time;—you'll be able for it."

The poor lad's heart was engaged on other thoughts and other scenes; his home, and its beloved inmates —sorrow, and the gush of young affections, were ready to burst forth.

"I cannot ate," said he, and he looked imploringly on the farmer and his wife, whilst the tears started to his eyes—"don't ax me, for my heart's wid them I left behind me, that I may never see agin;" and he wept in a burst of grief which he could not restrain.

Neither the strength nor tenderness of the lad's affection was unappreciated by this excellent couple. In a moment the farmer's wife was also in tears; nor did her husband break the silence for some minutes.

"The Almighty pity an' strengthen him!" said the farmer, "but he has the good an' the kind heart, an' would be a credit to any family.—Whisht, acushla machree—whisht, we won't ax you to ate—no indeed. It was out o' kindness we did it: don't be cast down aither; sure it isn't the ocean your crossin', but goin' from one county like to another. God 'ill guard an' take care o' you, so he will. Your intintion's good, an' he'll prosper it."

"He will, avick," said the farmer himself—"he will. Cheer up, my good boy! I know thim that's larned an' creditable clargy this day, that went as you're goin'—ay, an' that ris an' helped their paarents, an' put them above poverty an' distress; an' never fear, wid a blessin', but you'll do the same."

"That's what brings me at all," replied the boy, drying his tears; "if I was once able to take them out o' their distresses, I'd be happy—only I'm afeard the cares o' the world will break my father's heart before I have it in my power to assist him."

"No such thing, darlin'," said the good woman. "Sure his hopes out o' you, an' his love for you, will keep him up; an' you dunna but God may give him a blessin' too, avick."

"Mix another sup o' that for him," said the farmer—"he's low spirited, an' it's too strong to give him any more of it as it is. Childhre, where's the masther from us—eh? Why, thin, God help them, the crathurs—wasn't it *thoughtful** o' them to lave the place while he was at his dinner, for fraid he'd be dashed—manin' them young crathurs, Alley. But can you tell us where the 'masther' is? Isn't this his night wid us? I know he tuck his dinner here."

"Ay did he; but it's up to Larry Murphy's he's gone, to thry his son in his book-keepin'. Mavrone, but he had time enough to put him well through it afore this, any way."

As she spoke, a short thickset man, with black

* Considerate.

twinkling eyes and ruddy cheeks entered. This personage was no other than the schoolmaster of that district, who circulated, like a newspaper, from one farmer's house to another, in order to expound for his kind entertainers the news of the day, his own learning, and the very evident extent of their ignorance.

The moment he came in, the farmer and his wife rose with an air of much deference, and placed a chair for him exactly opposite the fire, leaving a respectful distance on each side, within which no illiterate mortal durst presume to sit.

"Misther Corcoran," said the farmer, presenting Jemmy's satchel, through which the shapes of the books were quite plain, "*thig in thu shinn?*" * and as he spoke he looked significantly at its owner.

"Ah!" replied the man of letters, "*thigum, thigum.* God be wid the day when I carried the likes of it. 'Tis a badge of polite genius, that no boy need be ashamed of. So my young suckling of litherature, you're bound for Munster?—for that counthry where the swallows fly in conic sections—where the magpies and the turkeys confab in Latin, and the cows and bullocks will roar you Doric Greek—bo-a-o—clamo. What's your pathronymic?—*quo nomine gowdes, Domine doctissime?*"

The lad was silent; but the farmer's wife turned up the whites of her eyes with an expression of wonder and surprise at the erudition of the "masther."

"I persave you are as yet uninitiated into the

* You understand this?

elementary *principia* of the languages; well — the honour is still before you. What's your name?"

"James M'Evoy, Sir."

Just now the farmer's family began to assemble round the spacious hearth; the young lads, whose instruction the worthy teacher claimed as his own peculiar task, came timidly forward, together with two or three pretty bashful girls with sweet flashing eyes, and countenances full of feeling and intelligence. Behind on the settles, half a dozen servants of both sexes sat in pairs—each boy placing himself beside his favourite girl. These *appeared* to be as strongly interested in the learned conversation which the master held, as if they were masters and mistresses of Munster Latin and Doric Greek themselves; but an occasional thump cautiously bestowed by no slender female hand upon the sturdy shoulder of her companion, or a dry cough from one of the young men, fabricated to drown the coming blow, gave slight indications that they contrived to have a little amusement among themselves, altogether independent of Mr. Corcoran's erudition.

When the latter came in, Jemmy was taking the tumbler of punch which the farmer's wife had mixed for him; on this he fixed an expressive glance, which instantly reverted to the *vanithee*, and from her to the large bottle which stood in a window to the right of the fire. It is a quick eye, however, that can anticipate Irish hospitality.

"Alley," said the farmer, ere the wife had time to comply with the hint conveyed by the black, twinkling eye of the schoolmaster—"why, Alley"—

"Sure, I am," she replied, "an' will have it for you in less than no time."

She accordingly addressed herself to the bottle, and in a few minutes handed a reeking jug of punch to the *Farithee*, or good man.

"Come, Masther, by the hand o' my body, I don't like dhry talk so long as I can get any thing to moisten the discoorse. Here's your health, Masther," continued the farmer, winking at the rest, "and a speedy conclusion to what you know! In throth, she's the pick of a good girl—not to mintion what she has for her portion. I'm a frind to the same family, an' will put a spoke in your wheel, Masther, that'll sarve you."

"Oh, Mr. Lanigan, very well, Sir—very well—you're becoming quite facetious upon me," said the little man, rather confused; "but upon my credit and reputation, except the amorous inclination in regard to me is on *her* side," and he looked sheepishly at his hands. "I can't say that the arrows of Cupid have as yet pinethrated the sintimintal side of my heart. It is not wid me as it was wid Dido—hem—

Non 'hæret lateri lethalis arundo,'

as Virgil says. Yet I can't say, but if a friend were to become spokesman for me, and insinuate in my behalf a small taste of amorous sintimintality, why hem, hem, hem! The company's health! Lad, James M'Evoy, *your* health, and success to you, my good boy!—hem, hem!"

"Here's wishin' him the same!" said the farmer.

"James," said the schoolmaster, "you are goin' to Munsther, an' I can say that I have travelled it from end to end, not to a bad purpose, I hope—hem! Well, a bouchal, there are hard days and nights before you, so keep a firm heart. If you have money, as 'tis likely you have, don't let a single rap of it into the hands of the schoolmaster, although the first thing he'll do will be to bring you home to his own house, and palaver you night an' day, till he succeeds in persuading you to leave it in his hands for security. You might, if not duly pre-admonished, surrender it to his solicitations, for—

'Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.'

Michael, what case is *mortalium?*" added he, suddenly addressing one of the farmer's sons: "come now, Michael, where's your brightness? What case is *mortalium?*"

The boy was taken by surprise, and for a few minutes could not reply.

"Come, man," said the father, "be sharp, spake out bravely, an' don't be afeard; nor don't be in a hurry aither, we'll wait for you."

"Let him alone—let him alone," said Corcoran; I'll face the same boy agin the county for *cuteness*, If he doesn't expound that, I'll never consthre a line of Latin, or Greek, or Masoretic, while I'm livin'."

His cunning master knew right well that the boy, who was only confused at the suddenness of the question, would feel no difficulty in answering it to his satisfaction. Indeed, it was impossible for him to

miss it, as he was then reading the seventh book of Virgil, and the fourth of Homer. It is, however, a trick with such masters to put simple questions of that nature to their pupils, when at the houses of their parents, as knotty and difficult, and when they are answered, to assume an air of astonishment at the profound reach of thought displayed by the pupil.

When Michael recovered himself, he instantly replied, " *Mortalium* is the ginitive case of *nemo*, by ' *Nomina Partitiva.*' "

Corcoran laid down the tumbler, which he was in the act of raising to his lips, and looked at the lad with an air of surprise and delight, then at the farmer and his wife, alternately, and shook his head with much mystery. " Michael," said he to the lad, " will you go out, and tell us what the night's doin'."

The boy accordingly went out—" Why," said Corcoran, in his absence, " if ever there was a phanix, and that boy will be the bird—an Irish phanix he will be, a

Rara avis in terris, nigroque simillima cygno !

There's no batin' him at any thing he undhertakes. Why, there's thim that are makin' good bread by their larnin', that couldn't resolve that; and you all saw how he did it widout the book! Why, if he goes on at this rate, I'm afraid he'll soon be too many for myself!—hem!"

"Too many for yourself! Fill the masther's tumbler, Alley. Too many for yourself! No, no! I doubt he' ll never see that day, bright as he is, an' cute.

That's it—put a hape upon it. Give me your hand, masther. I thank you for your attintion to him; an' the boy *is* a credit to us. Come over, Michael, avourneen. Here, take what's in this tumbler, an' finish it. Be a good boy, an' mind your lessons, an' do every thing the masther here—the Lord bless him!—bids you, an' you'll never want a frind, masther, nor a dinner, nor a bed, nor a guinea, while the Lord spares me aither the one or the other."

"I know it, Mr. Lanigan, I know it; and I will make that boy the pride o' Ireland, if I'm spared. I'll show him *cramboes* that would puzzle the great Scaliger himself; and many other difficulties I'll let him into, that I have never let out yet, except to Tim Kearney, that bate them all at Thrinity College in Dublin up, last June."

"Arrah, how was that, Masther?"

"Tim, you see, went in to his Entrance Examinayshuns, and one of the Fellows came to examine him, but divil a long it was till Tim sacked him.

"'Go back agin,' says Tim, 'and sind some one that's *able* to tache me, for you're *not*.'

"So another greater scholar agin came to thry Tim, and *did* thry him, and Tim made a hare of *him*, before all that was in the place—five or six thousand ladies and gintlemen, at laste!

"The great larned Fellows thin began to look odd enough; so they picked out the best scholar among them but one, and slipped him at Tim: but well becomes Tim, the never a long it was till he had *him*, too, as dumb as a post. The Fellow went back—

" ' Gintlemen,' says he to the rest, ' we'll be disgraced all out,' says he, ' for except the Prowost sacks that Munsther spalpeen, he'll bate us all, an' we'll never be able to hould up our heads afther.'

" Accordingly, the Prowost attacks Tim ; and such a meetin' as they had, never was seen in Thrinity College since its establishment. At last when they had been nine hours and a half at it, the Prowost put one word to him that Tim couldn't expound, so he lost it by *one* word only. For the last two hours the Prowost carried an the examinayshun in Hebrew, thinking, you see, that he *had* Tim there; but he was mistaken, for Tim answered him in good Munsther Irish, and it so happened that they understood each other, for the two languages are first cousins, or, at all evints, close blood relations. Tim was then pronounced to be the best scholar in Ireland except the Prowost ; though, among ourselves, they might have thought of the man that *taught* him. That, however, wasn't all. A young lady fell in love wid Tim, and is to make him a present of herself and her great fortune (three estates) the moment he becomes a counsellor : and in the mean time she allows him thirty pounds a year to bear his expenses, and live like a gintleman.

" Now to return to the youth in the corner : *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.* Jemmy, keep your money, or give it to the priest to keep, and it will be safest ; but by no means let the Hyblean honey of the schoolmaster's blarney deprive you of it, otherwise it will be a *vale, vale, longum vale* between you. *Crede experto!*"

"Masther," said the farmer, "many a strange accident you met wid on yer thravels through Munsther?"

"No doubt of that, Mr. Lanigan. I and another boy thravelled it in society together. One day we were walking towards a gintleman's house on the road side, and it happened that we met the owner of it in the vicinity, although we didn't know him to be such.

"'*Salvete, Domini!*' said he, in good fresh Latin.

"'*Tu sis salvus, quoque!*' said I to him, for my comrade wasn't cute, an' I was always orathor.

"'*Unde venitis?*' said he, comin' over us wid another deep piece of larnin,' the construction of which was, 'where do yees come from?'

"I replied—'*Per varios casus et tot discrimina rerum, venimus a Mayo.*'

"'Good!' said he, 'you're bright; follow me.'

"So he brought us over to his own house, and ordered us bread and cheese and a posset; for it was Friday, an' we couldn't touch mate. He, in the mane time, sat an' chatted along wid us. The thievin' cook, however, in making the posset, kept the curds to herself, except a slight taste, here and there, that floated on the top; but she was liberal enough of the whey, any how.

"Now I had been well trained to fishing in my more youthful days; and no gorsoon could grope a trout wid me. I accordingly sent the spoon through the pond before me wid the skill of a connoisseur; but to no purpose—it came up wid nothin' but the whey.

" So, said I off hand to the gintleman, houlding up the bowl, and looking at it with a disappointed face,

' Apparent *rari* nantes in gurgite vasto.

This,' says I, ' plase your hospitality, may be Pactolus, but the devil a taste o' the proper sand is in the bottom of it.'

" The wit of this, you see, pleased him, and we got an excellent treat in his *studium*, or study; for he was determined to give myself another trial.

" ' What's the wickedest line in Virgil?' said he.

" Now I had Virgil at my finger ends, so I answered him:

Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

" ' Very good,' said he, ' you have the genius, and will come to somethin' yet: now tell me the most moral line in Virgil.'

" I answered:

' *Discere justitiam monitu, et non temnere divos.*' *

" ' Depend upon it,' said he, you will be a luminary. The morning-star will be but a farthing candle to you; and if you take in the learning as you do the cheese, in a short time there won't be a man in Munsther fit to teach you,' and he laughed, for you see he had a tendency to jocosity.

" He did not give me up here, however, being determined to go deeper wid me.

* He is evidently drawing the long bow here; this anecdote has been told before.

" 'Can you translate a newspaper into Latin prose?' said he.

" Now the divil a one o' me was just then sure about the prose, so I was goin' to tell him; but before I had time to speak, he thrust the paper into my hand, and desired me to thranslate half-a-dozen barbarous advertisements.

" The first that met me was about a reward offered for a Newfoundland dog and a terrier, that had been stolen from a fishing-tackle manufacturer, and then came a list of his shabby merchandize, ending with a long-winded encomium upon his gunpowder, shot, and double-barrelled guns. Now may I be shot wid a blank cartridge, if I ever felt so much at an amplush in my life, and I said so.

" ' Your honour has hooked me wid the fishing-hooks,' said I; ' but I grant the cheese was good bait, any how.'

" So he laughed heartily, and bid me go on.

" Well, I thought the first was difficult; but the second was Masoretic to it—something about draw backs, excisemen, and a long custom-house list, that would puzzle Publius Virgilius Maro, if he was set to translate it. However, I went through wid it as well as I could; where I couldn't find Latin, I laid in the Greek, and where the Greek failed me, I gave the Irish, which, to tell the truth, in consequence of its vernacularity, I found to be the most convanient. Och, och, many a larned scrimmage I have signalized myself in, during my time. Sure my name's as common as a mail-coach in Thrinity College; and 'tis well known there isn't a Fellow

in it but I could sack, except, may be, the Prowost. That's their own opinion. 'Corcoran,' says the Prowost, 'is the most larned man in Ireland; an' I'm not ashamed,' says he, 'to acknowledge that I'd rather decline meeting him upon deep points.' Ginteels, all your healths—hem! But among ourselves I could bog him in a very short time; though I'd scorn to deprive the gintleman of his reputaytion or his place, even if he sent me a challenge of larnin' to-morrow, although he's too cute to venture on doing *that*—hem, hem!"

To hear an obscure creature, whose name was but faintly known in the remote parts even of the parish in which he lived, draw the long bow at such a rate was highly amusing. The credulous character of his auditory, however, was no slight temptation to him; for he knew that next to the legends of their saints, or the Gospel itself, his fictions ranked in authenticity; and he was determined that it should not be his fault if their opinion of his learning and talents were not raised to the highest point.

The feeling experienced by the poor scholar when he awoke the next morning, was one both of satisfaction and sorrow. He thought once more of his home and kindred, and reflected that it might be possible he had seen the last of his beloved relations. His grief, however, was checked when he remembered the warm and paternal affection with which he was received on the preceding night by his hospitable countryman. He offered up his prayers to God; humbly besought his grace and protection; nor did he forget to implore a blessing upon those who had

thus soothed his early sorrows, and afforded him, though a stranger and friendless, shelter, comfort, and sympathy.

"I hope," thought he, "that I will meet many such, till I overcome my difficulties, an' find myself able to assist my poor father an' mother!"

And he did meet many such among the humble and despised, and neglected of his countrymen; for—and we say it with pride—the character of this excellent farmer is thoroughly that of our peasantry within the range of domestic life.

When he had eaten a comfortable breakfast, and seen his satchel stuffed with provision for his journey, the farmer brought him up to his own room, in which were also his wife and children.

"God," said he, "has been good to me, blessed be his holy name!—betther it appears, in one sinse, than he has been to you, dear—though, maybe, I don't desarve it as well. But no matther, acushla; *I* have it, an' *you* want it; so here's a thrifle to help you forrid in your larnin'; an' all I ax from you is to offer up a bit of a prayer for me, of an odd time, an' if ever you live to be a priest, to say, if it wouldn't be throublesome, one Mass for me an' those that you see about me. It's not much, James agra—only two guineas. They may stand your friend, whin friends will be scarce wid you; though, I hope, that won't be the case aither."

The tears were already streaming down Jemmy's cheeks. "Oh," said the artless boy, "God for ever reward you! but sure I have a great dale of money in

the—in the—cuff o' my coat. Indeed, I have, an' I won't want it!"

The farmer, affected by the utter simplicity of the lad, looked at his wife and smiled, although a tear stood in his eye at the time. She wiped her eyes with her apron, and backed the kind offer of her husband.

"Take it, asthore," she added. "In your cuff! Musha, God help you! sure it's not much you or the likes of you can have in your cuff, avourneen! Don't be ashamed, but take it; we can well afford it, glory be to God for it! It's not, agra, bekase you're goin' the way you are—though that same's an honour to you—but bekase our hearts warmed to you, that we offered it, an' bekase we would wish you to be thinkin' of us now an' thin, when you're in a strange part of the country. Let me open your pocket an' put them into it. That's a good boy, thank you, an' God bless an' prosper you! I'm sure you wor always biddable."

"Now, childher," said the farmer, addressing his sons and daughters, "never see the sthranger widout a frind, nor wantin' a bed or a dinner, when you grow up to be men an' women. There's many a turn in this world; we may be strangers ourselves; an' think of what I would feel if any of you was far from me, widout money or friends, when I'd hear that you met a father in a strange counthry that lightened your hearts by his kindness. Now, dear, the carts 'ill be ready in no time—eh? Why there they are at the gate waitin' for you. Get into one of them, an' they'll lave you in the next town. Come, man,

bud-an' age, be stout-hearted, an' don't cry—sure we did nothin' for you to spake of."

He shook the poor scholar by the hand, and drawing his hat over his eyes, passed hurriedly out of the room. Alley stooped down, kissed his lips, and wept; and the children each embraced him with that mingled feeling of compassion and respect which is uniformly entertained for the poor scholar in Ireland.

The boy felt as if he had been again separated from his parents; with a sobbing bosom and wet cheeks he bid them farewell, and mounting one of the carts was soon beyond sight and hearing of the kind-hearted farmer and his family.

When the cart had proceeded about a mile, it stopped, and one of the men who accompanied it, addressing a boy who passed with two sods of turf under his arm, desired him to hurry on and inform his master that they waited for him.

"Tell Misther Corcoran to come into coort," said the man, laughing, "my Lordship's waitin' to hear his defince for intindin' *not* to run away wid Miss Judy Malowny. Tell him Lord *Carty's* ready to pass sintince on him for not stalin' the heart of her wid his Rule o' Three. Ha! by the holy farmer, you'll get it for stayin' from school to this hour. Be quick, abouchal!"

In a few minutes the trembling urchin, glad of any message that might serve to divert the dreaded birch from himself, entered the uproarious "Siminary," caught his forelock, bobbed down his head to the master, and pitched his "two sods" into a little heap of turf which lay in the corner of the school.

" Arrah, Pat Roach, is this an hour to inter into my establishment wid impunity? Eh, you Rosicrusian?"

" Masther, Sir," replied the adroit monkey, " I've a message for you, Sir, i' you plase."

" An' what might the message be, Masther Pat Roach? To dine to-day wid your worthy father, abouchal?"

" No, Sir; it's from one o' Mr. Lanigan's boys—him that belongs to the carts, Sir; he wants to spake to you, Sir, i' you plase."

" An' do you give that by way of an apologetical oration for your absence from the advantages of my tuition until this hour? However, *non constat, Patrici;* I'll pluck the crow wid you on my return. If you don't find yourself a well-flogged youth for your 'mitchin',' never say that this right hand can administer condign punishment to that part of your physical theory which constitutes the antithesis to your *vacuum caput. En et ecce*, you villain," he added, pointing to the birch, " it's newly cut and trimmed, and pregnant wid alacrity for the operation. I correct, Patricius, on fundamental principles, which you'll soon *feel* to your cost."

" Masther, Sir," replied the lad, in a friendly, conciliating tone, " my fadher 'ud be oblaged to you, if you'd take share of a fat goose wid him to-morrow."

" Go to your sate, Paddy, avourneen; devil a dacent boy in the siminary I joke so much wid, as I do wid yourself; an' all out of respect for your worthy parents. Faith, I've a great regard for them, all out, an' tell them so."

He then proceeded to the carts, and approaching

Jemmy, gave him such advice touching his conduct in Munster, as he considered to be most serviceable to an inexperienced lad of his years.

"Here," said the kind-hearted soul — "here, James, is my mite; it's but bare ten shillings; but if I could make it a pound for you, it would give me a degree of delectability which I have not enjoyed for a long time. The truth is, there's something like the *nodus matrimonii*, or what they facetiously term the priest's gallows, dangling over my head, so that any little thrifle I may get must be kept together for that crisis, James, abouchal; so that must be my apology for not giving you more, joined to the naked fact, that I never was remarkable for a superfluity of cash under any circumstances. Remember what I told you last night. Don't let a shilling of your money into the hands of the masther you settle wid. Give it to the parish priest, and dhraw it from him when you want it. Don't join the parties or the factions of the school. Above all, spake ill of nobody; and if the masther is harsh upon you, either bear it patiently, or mintion it to the priest, or to some other person of respectability in the parish, and you'll be protected. You'll be apt to meet cruelty enough, my good boy; for there are larned Neros in Munster, who'd flog if the province was in flames.

"Now, James, I'll tell you what you'll do, when you reach the larned south. Plant yourself on the highest hill in the neighbourhood wherein the academician with whom you intend to stop, lives. Let the hour of reconnoitring be that in which dinner is preparing. When seated there, James, take a survey

of the smoke that ascends from the chimnies of the farmers' houses, and be sure to direct your steps to that from which the highest and merriest column issues. This is the old plan, and it is a sure one. The highest smoke rises from the largest fire, the largest fire boils the biggest pot, the biggest pot generally holds the fattest bacon, and the fattest bacon is kept by the richest farmer. Its a wholesome and comfortable *climax*, my boy, and one by which I myself was enabled to keep a dacent portion of educated flesh between the master's birch and my ribs. The science itself is called Gastric Geography, and is peculiar only to itinerant young gintlemen who seek for knowledge in the classical province of Munster.

"Here's a book that thravelled along wid myself through all peregrinations—Creech's Translation of Horace. Keep it for my sake; and when you accomplish your education, if you return home this way, I'd thank you to give me a call. Farewell! God bless you and prosper you as I wish, and as I am sure you desarve."

He shook the lad by the hand; and as it was probable that his own former struggles with poverty, when in the pursuit of education, came with all the power of awakened recollection to his mind, he hastily drew his hand across his eyes, and returned to resume the brief but harmless authority of the ferula.

After arriving at the next town, Jemmy found himself once more prosecuting his journey alone. In proportion as he advanced into a strange land, his spirits became depressed, and his heart cleaved more

and more to those whom he had left behind him. There is, however, an enthusiasm in the visions of youth, in the speculations of a young heart, which frequently overcomes difficulties that a mind taught by the experience of life would often shrink from encountering. We may all remember the utter recklessness of danger with which, in our youthful days, we crossed floods, or stood upon the brow of yawning precipices—feats which, in after years, the wealth of kingdoms could not induce us to perform. Experience, as well as conscience, makes cowards of us all.

The poor scholar in the course of his journey had the satisfaction of finding himself an object of kind and hospitable attention to his countrymen. His satchel of books was literally a passport to their hearts. For instance, as he wended his solitary way, depressed and travel-worn, he was frequently accosted by labourers from behind a ditch on the road-side, and, after giving a brief history of the object he had in view, brought, if it was dinner-hour, to some farm-house or cabin, where he was made to partake of their meal. Even those poor creatures who gain a scanty subsistence by keeping what are called "dhry lodgins," like *lucus a non lucendo*, because they never keep out the rain, and have mostly a bottle of whiskey for those who know *how* to call for it,—even they, in most instances, not only refused to charge the poor scholar for his bed, but declined receiving any remuneration for his subsistence.

"Och, och, no, you poor young crathur, not from *you*.' No, no; if we wouldn't help the likes o' you, who ought we to help? No, dear; but instead o'

the *airighad*,* jist lave us your blessin' an' may be we'll thrive as well wid that, as we would wid your little pences, that you'll be wantin' for yourself, whin your frinds won't be near to help you."

Many, in fact, were the little marks of kindness and attention which the poor lad received on his way. Sometimes a ragged peasant, if he happened to be his fellow-traveller, would carry his satchel so long as they travelled together; or a carman would give him a lift on his empty car; or some humorous postilion, or tipsy "shay-boy," with a comical leer in his eye, would shove him into his vehicle, remarking—

"Bedad, let nobody say you're a poor scholar *now*, an' you goin' to school in a coach! Be the piper that played afore Moses, if ever any rascal upbraids you wid it, tell him, says you—'you damned rap,' says you, 'I wint to school in a coach! an' that,' says you, 'was what none o' yer beggarly gineration was ever able to do,' says you; 'an' moreover, be the same token,' says you, 'be the holy farmer, if you bring it up to me, I'll make a third eye in your forehead wid the butt o' this whip,' says you. Whish! darlins! That's the go! There's drivin', Barny! Eh?"

At length, after much toil and travel, he reached the South, having experienced as he proceeded a series of affectionate attentions, which had, at least, the effect of reconciling him to the measure he had taken, and impressing upon his heart a deeper confidence in the kindness and hospitality of his countrymen.

* Money.

Upon the evening of the day on which he terminated his journey, twilight was nearly falling; the town in which he intended to stop for the night was not a quarter of a mile before him, yet he was scarcely able to reach it; his short, yielding steps were evidently those of a young and fatigued traveller: his brow was moist with perspiration; he had just begun, too, to consider in what manner he should introduce himself to the master who taught the school at which he had been advised to stop, when he heard a step behind him, and on looking back, he discovered a tall, well-made, ruddy-faced young man, dressed in black, with a book in his hand, walking after him.

"*Unde et quo viator?*" said the stranger on coming up with him.

"Oh, Sir," replied Jemmy, "I have not Latin *yet*."

"You are on your way to seek it, however," replied the other. "Have you travelled far?"

"A long way, indeed, Sir; I came from the County ——, Sir,—the upper part of it."

"Have you letters from your parish priest?"

"I have, Sir, and one from my father's landlord, Square Benson, if you ever heard of him."

"What's your object in learning Latin?"

"To be a priest, Sir, wid the help o' God; an' to rise my poor father an' mother out of their poverty."

His companion, after hearing this reply, bent a glance upon him, that indicated the awakening of an interest in the lad much greater than he probably otherwise would have felt.

"It's only of late," continued the boy, "that my father an' mother got poor; they were once very well to do in the world. But they were put out o' their farm in ordher that the agint might put a man that had married a *get** of his own into it. My father intended to lay his case before Colonel B———, the landlord; but he couldn't see him at all, bekase he never comes near the estate. The agint 's called Yallow Sam, Sir; he's rich through cheatery an' dishonesty; puts money out at intherest, then goes to law, an' brakes the people entirely; for, somehow, he never was known to lose a law-suit at all, Sir. They say it's the divil, Sir, that keeps the lawyers on his side; an' that when he an' the lawyers do be dhrawin' up their writins, the devil—God betune me an harm! —does be helpin' them!"

"And is Colonel B——— actually—or, rather, was he your father's landlord?"

"He was, indeed, Sir; it's thruth I'm tellin' you."

"Singular enough! Stand beside me here—do you see that large house to the right among the trees?"

"I do, Sir; a great big house, entirely—like a castle, Sir."

"The same. Well that house belongs to Colonel B———, and I am very intimate with him. I am Catholic curate of this parish; and I was, before my ordination, private tutor in his family for four years."

"Maybe, Sir, you might have intherest to get my father back into his farm?"

"I do not know that, my good lad, for I am told Colonel B——— is rather embarrassed, and, if I

* A term implying illegitimacy.

mistake not, in the power of the man you call Yellow Sam, who has, I believe, heavy mortgages upon his property. But no matter, if I cannot help your father, I shall be able to serve yourself. Where do you intend to stop for the night?"

"In dhry lodgin', Sir, that's where my father an' mother bid me stop always. They war very kind to me, Sir, in the dhry lodgins."

"Who is there in Ireland who would not be kind *to you*, my good boy? I trust you do not neglect your religious duties?"

"Wid the help o' God, Sir, I strive to attind to them as well as I can; particularly since I left my father and mother. Every night an' mornin', Sir, I say five Pathers, five Aves, an' a Creed; an' sometimes when I'm walkin' the road, I slip up an odd Pather, Sir, an' Ave, that God may grant me good luck."

The priest smiled at his candour and artlessness, and could not help feeling the interest which the boy had already excited in him increase.

"You do right," said he, "and take care that you neglect not the worship of God. Avoid bad company; be not quarrelsome at school; study to improve yourself diligently; attend mass regularly; and be punctual in going to confession."

After some further conversation the priest and he entered the town together.

"This is my house," said the former; "or if not altogether mine—at least, that in which I lodge; let me see you here at two o'clock to-morrow. In the mean time, follow me, and I shall place you with a

family where you will experience every kindness and attention that can make you comfortable."

He then led him a few doors up the street, till he stopped at a decent-looking "House of Entertainment," to the proprietors of which he introduced him.

"Be kind to this strange boy," said the worthy clergyman, "and whatever the charges of his board and lodging may be until we get him settled, I shall be accountable for them."

"God forbid, your Reverence, that ever a penny belongin' to a poor boy lookin' for his larnin' should go into our pockets, if he was wid us twelve months in the year. No—no! He can stay wid the bouchaleens;* let them be thryin' one another in their books. If he is fardher on in the Latin then Andy, he can help Andy; an' if Andy has the foreway of him, why Andy can help him. Come here, boys, all of yees. Here's a comarade for yees—a dacent boy that's lookin' for his larnin', the Lord enable him! Now be kind to him, an' whisper," he added, in an under tone, "don't be bringin' a blush to the gorsoon's face. Do yees hear? Ma chorp! if yees do! —Now mind it. Yees know what I can do whin I'm well vexed! Go, now an' get him somethin' to ate an' dhrink, an' let him sleep wid Barney in the feather bed."

During the course of the next day, the benevolent curate introduced him to the parish priest, who, from the frequent claims urged by poor scholars upon his patronage, felt no particular interest in his case. He wrote a short letter, however, to the master with

* Little boys.

whom Jemmy intended to become a pupil, stating that "he was an honest boy, the son of *legitimate parents*, and worthy of consideration."

The curate, who saw further into the boy's character than the parish priest, accompanied him on the following day to the school; introduced him to the master in the most favourable manner, and recommended him in general to the hospitable care of all the pupils. This introduction did not serve the boy so much as might have been expected; there was nothing particular in the letter of the *parish* priest, and the curate was *but* a curate—no formidable personage in *any* church, where the good-will of the rector has not been already secured.

Jemmy returned that day to his lodgings, and the next morning, with his Latin Grammar under his arm, he went to the school to taste the first bitter fruits of the tree of knowledge.

On entering it, which he did with a beating heart, he found the despot of a hundred subjects sitting behind a desk, with his hat on, a brow superciliously severe, and his nose crimped into a most cutting and vinegar curl. The truth was, the master knew the character of the curate, and felt that because he had taken Jemmy under his protection, no opportunity remained for him of fleecing the boy, under the pretence of securing his money, and that consequently the arrival of the poor scholar would be no windfall, as he had expected.

When Jemmy entered, he looked first at the master for his welcome; but the master, who verified the proverb, that there are none so blind as those who will

not see, took no notice whatsoever of him. The boy then looked timidly about the school in quest of a friendly face, and indeed few faces except friendly ones were turned upon him.

Several of the scholars rose up simultaneously to speak to him; but the pedagogue angrily inquired why they had left their seats and their business.

"Why, Sir," said a young Munsterman, with a fine Milesian face—"be Gorra, Sir, I blieve if *we* don't welcome the poor scholar, I think *you* won't. This is the boy, Sir, that Mr. O'Brien came along wid yistherday, an' spoke so well of."

"I know that, Thady; and Misther O'Brien thinks, because he himself first passed through that overgrown hedge-school wid slates upon the roof of it, called Thrinity College, and matriculated in Maynooth afther, that he has legal authority to recommend every young vagrant to the gratuitous benefits of legitimate classicality. An', I suppose, that you are acting the Pathrun, too, Thady, and intind to take this young wild-goose under your protection?"

"Why, Sir, isn't he a poor scholar? Sure he mustn't want his bit an' sup, nor his night's lodgin', any how. You're to give him his larnin' only, Sir."

"I suppose so, Mr. Thaddeus; but this is the penalty of celebrity. If I weren't so celebrated a man for classics as I am, I would have none of this work. I tell you, Thady, if I had fifty sons I wouldn't make one o' them *celebrated*."

"Wait till you have one first, Sir, and you may make him as great a numskull as you plase, Masther."

"But in the mean time, Thady, I'll have no dicta-

tion from you, as to whether I'll have one or fifty; or as to whether he'll be an ass or a Newton. I say, that a dearth of larnin' is like a year of famine in Ireland. When the people are hard pushed, they bleed the fattest bullocks, an' live on their blood; an' so it is wid us Academicians. It's always he that has the most larned blood in his veins, and the greatest quantity of it, that such hungry leeches fasten on."

"Thrue for you, Sir," said the youth with a smile; "but they say the bullocks always fatten the betther for it. I hope you'll bleed well now, Sir."

"Thady, I don't like the curl of your nose; an', moreover, I have always found you prone to sedition. You remember your conduct at the 'Barring out.' I tell you it's well that your worthy father is a dacent, wealthy man, or I'd be apt to give you a *memoria technica* on the *subtratum*, Thady."

"God be praised for my father's wealth, Sir! But I'd never wish to have a good memory in the way you mention."

"Faith, an' I'll be apt to add that to your other qualities, if you don't take care of yourself."

"I want no such addition, Masther; if you do, you'll be apt to subtract yourself from this neighbourhood, an', maybe, there won't be more than a cipher gone out of it, afther all."

"Thady, you're a wag," exclaimed the crest-fallen pedagogue; "take the lad to your own sate, and show him his task. How is your sister's sore throat, Thady?"

"Why, Sir," replied the benevolent young wit, "she's betther than I am. She can *swallow* more, Sir."

"Not of larnin', Thady; there you've the widest gullet in the parish."

"My father's the richest man in it, Masther," replied Thady. "I think, Sir, my gullet and his purse are much about the same size—wid *you*."

"Thady, you're first-rate at a reply; but exceedingly deficient in the retort courteous. Take the lad to your sate, I say, and see how far he is advanced, and what he is fit for. I suppose, as you are so ginerous, you will volunteer to tache him yourself."

"I'll do that wid pleasure, Sir: but I'd like to know whether *you* intind to tache him or not."

"An' I'd like to know, Thady, who's to pay me for it, if I do. A purty return Michael Rooney made me for making him such a linguist as he is. 'You're a tyrant,' said he, when he grew up, 'and instead of expecting me to thank you for your instructions, you ought to thank me for not preparing you for the county hospital, as a memento of the cruelty and brutality you made me feel, when I had the misfortune to be a poor scholar under you.' And so, because he became curate of the parish, he showed me the outside of it."

"But will you tache this poor young boy, Sir?"

"Let me know who's to guarantee his payments."

"I have money myself, Sir, to pay you for two years," replied Jemmy. "They told me, Sir, that you were a great scholar, an' I refused to stop in other schools by rason of the name you have for Latin an' Greek."

"*Verbum sat.*," exclaimed the barefaced knave. "Come here. Now, you see, I persave you have

dacency. Here is your task; get that half page by heart. You have a cute look, an' I've no doubt but the stuff's in you. Come to me afther dismiss, 'till we have a little talk together."

He accordingly pointed out his task, after which he placed him at his side, lest the inexperienced boy might be put on his guard by any of the scholars. In this intention, however, he was frustrated by Thady, who, as he thoroughly detested the knavish tyrant, resolved to caution the poor scholar against his dishonesty. Thady, indeed, most heartily despised the mercenary pedagogue, not only for his obsequiousness to the rich, but on account of his severity to the children of the poor. About two o'clock the young wag went out for a few minutes, and immediately returned in great haste to inform the master, that Mr. Delany, the parish priest, and two other gentlemen, wished to see him over at the Cross-Keys, an inn which was kept at a place called the Nine Mile House, within a few perches of the school. The parish priest, though an ignorant insipid old dunce, was the master's patron, and his slightest wish a divine law to him. The little despot, forgetting his prey, instantly repaired to the Cross-Keys, and in his absence, Thady, together with the larger boys of the school, made M'Evoy acquainted with the fraud about to be practised on him.

"His intintion," said they, "is to keep you at home to-night, in ordher to get whatever money you have into his own hands, that he may keep it safe for you; but if you give him a penny, you may bid farewell to it. Put it in the curate's hands," added Thady, "or in my father's, an' thin it'll be safe. At

all evints, don't stay wid him this night. He'll take your money and then turn you off in three or four weeks."

"I didn't intind to give him my money," replied Jemmy; "a schoolmaster I met on my way here, bid me not to do it. I'll give it to the priest."

"Give it to the curate," said Thady—"wid him it'll be safe; for the parish priest doesn't like to throuble himself wid any thing of the kind."

This was agreed upon; the boy was prepared against the designs of the master, and a plan laid down for his future conduct. In the mean time, the latter re-entered the school in a glow of indignation and disappointment.

Thady, however, disregarded him; and as the master knew that the influence of the boy's father could at any time remove him from the parish, his anger subsided without any very violent consequences. The parish priest was his avowed patron, it is true; but if the parish priest knew that Mr. O'Rorke was dissatisfied with him, that moment he would join Mr. O'Rorke in expelling him from the neighbourhood. Mr. O'Rorke was a wealthy and a hospitable man, but the schoolmaster was neither the one nor the other.

During school hours that day, many a warm-hearted urchin entered into conversation with the poor scholar; some moved by curiosity to hear his brief and simple history; others anxious to offer him a temporary asylum in their father's houses; and several to know if he had the requisite books, assuring him that if he had not, they would lend them to him. These proofs of artless generosity touched the home-

less youth's heart the more acutely, inasmuch as he could perceive but too clearly that the eye of the master rested upon him, from time to time, with no auspicious glance.

When the scholars were dismissed, a scene occurred which was calculated to produce a smile, although it certainly placed the poor scholar in a predicament by no means agreeable. It resulted from a contest among the boys as to who should first bring him home. The master, who by that cunning for which the knavish are remarkable, had discovered in the course of the day that his design upon the boy's money was understood, did not ask him to his house. The contest was, therefore, among the scholars, who, when the master had disappeared from the school-room, formed themselves into a circle, of which Jemmy was the centre, each pressing his claim to secure him.

"The right 's wid me," exclaimed Thady: "I stood to him all day, an' I say I'll have him for this night. Come wid me, Jimmy. Didn't I do most for you to-day?"

"I'll never forget your kindness," replied poor Jemmy, quite alarmed at the boisterous symptoms of pugilism which already began to appear. In fact, many a tiny fist was shut, as a suitable accompaniment to the arguments with which they enforced their assumed rights.

"There now," continued Thady, "that puts an ind to it; he says he'll never forget my kindness. That's enough, come wid me, Jimmy."

"*Is it* enough?" said a lad, who, if his father was less wealthy than Thady's, was resolved to put

strength of arm against strength of purse. "Maybe it isn't enough! *I* say I bar it, if your fadher was fifty times as rich! Rich! Arrah, don't be comin' over us in regard of your riches, man alive! I'll bring the sthrange boy home this very night, an' it isn't your father's dirty money that'll prevint me!"

"I'd advise you to get a double ditch about your nose," replied Thady, "before you begin to say any thing disrespectful aginst my father.—Don't think to ballyrag over me. *I'll* bring the boy, for I have the best right to him. Didn't I *do** the masther on his account?"

"A double ditch about my nose?"

"Aiye!"

"Are you able to fight me?"

"I'm able to thry it, any how, an' willin' too."

"Do you *say* you're able to fight me?"

"I'll bring the boy home whether or not."

"Thady's not your match, Jack Ratigan," said another boy. "Why don't you challenge your match?"

"If *you* say a word, I'll half-sole your eye. Let him *say* whether he's able to fight me like a man or not. That's the chat."

"Half-sole my eye! Thin here I am, an' why don't you do it. You're crowin' over a boy that you're bigger than. *I'll* fight you for Thady. Now half-sole my eye if you dar! Eh? Here's my eye now! Arrah, be the holy man, I'd——Don't we know the white hen's in you. Didn't Barny Mur-

* Outwit.

tagh cow you at the black-pool, on Thursday last whin we wor bathin'."

"Come, Ratigan," said Thady, "peel an' turn out. I say I *am* able to fight you; an' I'll make you ate your words aginst my father, by way of givin' you your dinner. An' I'll make the dacent strange boy walk home wid me over your body—that is, if he'd not be afraid to dirty his feet."

Hartigan and Thady immediately set to, and in a few minutes there were scarcely a little pair of fists present that were not at work, either on behalf of the two first combatants, or with a view to determine their own private rights in being the first to exercise hospitality towards the amazed poor scholar. The fact was, that while the two largest boys were arguing the point, about thirty or forty minor disputes all ran parallel to theirs, and their mode of decision was immediately adopted by the pugnacious urchins of the school. In this manner they were engaged, poor Jemmy attempting to tranquillize and separate them, when the master, armed in all his terrors, presented himself.

With the tact of a sly old disciplinarian, he first secured the door, and instantly commenced the agreeable task of promiscuous castigation. Heavy and vindictive did his arm descend upon those whom he suspected to have cautioned the boy against his rapacity; nor amongst the warm-hearted lads whom he thwacked so cunningly, was Thady passed over with a tender hand.—Springs, bouncings, doublings, blowing of fingers, scratching of heads, and rubbing of elbows—shouts of pain, and doleful exclamations,

accompanied by action that displayed surpassing agility—marked the effect with which he plied the instrument of punishment. In the mean time, the spirit of reaction, to use a modern phrase, began to set in. The master, while thus engaged in dispensing justice, first received a rather vigorous thwack on the ear from behind, by an anonymous contributor, who gifted him with what is called a musical ear, for it sang during five minutes afterwards. The monarch, when turning round to ascertain the traitor, received another insult on the most indefensible side, and that with a cordiality of manner, that induced him to send his right hand a reconnoitring the invaded part. He wheeled round a second time with more alacrity than before; but nothing less than the head of Janus could have secured him on the occasion. The anonymous contributor sent him a fresh article. This was supported by another kick behind; the turf began to fly; one after another came in contact with his head and shoulders so rapidly, that he found himself, instead of being the assailant, actually placed upon his defence. The insurrection spread, the turf flew more thickly; his subjects closed in upon him in a more compact body; every little fist itched to be at him; the larger boys boldly laid in the facers, punched him in the stomach, treated him most opprobriously behind, every kick and cuff accompanied by a memento of his cruelty; in short, they compelled him, like Charles the Tenth, ignominiously to fly from his dominions.

On finding the throne vacant, some of them suggested that it ought to be overturned altogether, Thady, however, who was the ringleader of the rebel-

Drawn & Etched by WH. Brooke R.S.A.

The insurrection spread. the turf began to fly!

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lion, persuaded them to be satisfied with what they had accomplished, and consequently succeeded in preventing them from destroying the fixtures.

Again they surrounded the poor scholar, who, feeling himself the cause of the insurrection, appeared an object of much pity. Such was his grief that he could scarcely reply to them. Their consolation on witnessing his distress was overwhelming; they desired him to think nothing of it; if the master, they told him, should wreak his resentment on *him*, "be the holy farmer, they would *pay** the *masther*." Thady's claim was now undisputed; with only the injury of a black eye, and a lip swelled to the size of a sausage, he walked home in triumph, the poor scholar accompanying him.

The master, who feared that this open contempt of his authority, running up, as it did, into a very unpleasant species of retaliation, was something like a signal for him to leave the parish, felt rather more of the penitent the next morning than did any of his pupils. He was by no means displeased, therefore, to see them drop in about the usual hour. They came, however, not one by one, but in compact groups, each officered by two or three of the larger boys; for they feared that had they entered singly, he might have punished them singly, until his vengeance should be satisfied. It was by bitter and obstinate struggles that they succeeded in repressing their mirth, when he appeared at his desk with one of his eyes literally closed, and his nose considerably improved in size and richness of colour. When they were all assembled,

* Punish.

he hemmed several times, and in a woe-begone tone of voice, split—by a feeble attempt at maintaining authority, and suppressing his terrors—into two parts that jarred most ludicrously, he briefly addressed them as follows:

"Gintlemen classics—I have been now twenty-six years engaged in the propagation of Latin and Greek litherature, in conjunction wid Mathematics, but never until yesterday has my influence been spurned; never until yesterday have sacrilegious hands been laid upon my person; never until yesterday have I been kicked—insidiously, ungallantly, and treacherously kicked—by my own subjects. No, gintlemen—and whether I ought to bestow that respectable epithet upon you after yesterday's proceedings is a matter which admits of dispute;—never before has the lid of my eye been laid drooping, and that in such a manner that I must be blind to the conduct of half of my pupils, whether I will or not. You have complained, it appears, of my want of impartiality; but God knows you have compelled me to be partial for a week to come. Neither blame me if I may appear to look upon you with scorn for the next fortnight; for I am compelled to turn up my nose at you much against my own inclination. You need never want an illustration of the *naso adunco* of Horace again—I'm a living example of it. That, and the doctrine of projectile forces, have been exemplified in a manner that will prevent me from ever relishing these subjects in future. No king can consider himself properly such, until after he has received the oil of consecration; but you, it appears, think differently. You have unkinged me

first, and anointed me afterwards; but I say, no potentate would relish such unction. It smells confoundedly of republicanism. Maybe this is what *you* understand by the Republic of Letters; but if it be, I would advise you to change your principles. You treated my ribs as if they were the ribs of a common man; my shins you took liberties wid even to excoriation; my head you made a target of for your hardest turf; and my nose you dishonoured to my face. Was this ginerous? was it discreet? was it subordinate? and, above all, was it *classical?* However, I will show you what greatness of mind is; I will convince you that it is more noble and god-like to forgive an injury, or rather five dozen injuries, than to avenge one; when—hem—yes, I say, when I—I—*might* so easily avenge it. I now present you wid an amnesty: return to your allegiance; but never, while in this siminary, under my tuition, attimpt to take the execution of the laws into your own hands. Homerians, come up?"

This address, into which he purposely threw a dash of banter and mock gravity, delivered with the accompaniments of his swelled nose and drooping eye, pacified his audience more readily than a serious one would have done. It was received without any reply or symptom of disrespect, unless the occasional squeak of a suppressed laugh, or the visible shaking of many sides with inward convulsions, might be termed such.

In the course of the day, it is true, their powers of maintaining gravity were put to a severe test, particularly when, while hearing a class, he began to

adjust his drooping eye-lid, or coax back his nose into its natural position. On these occasions a sudden pause might be noticed in the business of the class; the boy's voice who happened to read at the time would fail him; aud on resuming his sentence by command of the master, its tone was tremulous, and scarcely adequate to the task of repeating the words without his bursting into laughter. The master observed all this clearly enough, but his mind was already made up to take no further notice of what had happened.

All this, however, conduced to render the situation of the poor scholar much more easy, or rather less penal than it would otherwise have been. Still the innocent lad was on all possible occasions a butt for this miscreant. To miss a word was a pretext for giving him a cruel blow. To arrive two or three minutes later than the appointed hour was certain on his part to be attended with immediate punishment. Jemmy bore it all with silent heroism. He shed no tear—he uttered no remonstrance; but under the anguish of pain so barbarously inflicted, he occasionally looked round upon his schoolfellows with an expression of silent entreaty that was seldom lost upon them. Cruel to him the master often was, but to inhuman barbarity the large scholars never permitted him to descend. Whenever any of the wealthier farmers' sons had neglected their lessons, or deserved chastisement, the mercenary creature substituted a joke for the birch; but as soon as the son of a poor man, or, which was better still, the poor scholar came before him, he transferred that punishment which the

wickedness or idleness of respectable boys deserved, to his or their shoulders. For this outrageous injustice the hard-hearted old villain had some plausible excuse ready, so that it was in many cases difficult for Jemmy's generous companions to interfere in his behalf, or parry the sophistry of such a petty tyrant.

In this miserable way did he pass over the tedious period of a year, going about every night in rotation with the scholars, and severely beaten on all possible occasions by the master. His conduct and manners won him the love and esteem of all except his tyrant instructor. His assiduity was remarkable, and his progress in the elements of English and classical literature surprisingly rapid. This added considerably to his character, and procured him additional respect. It was not long until he made himself useful and obliging to all the boys beneath his standing in the school. These services he rendered with an air of such kindness, and a grace so naturally winning, that the attachment of his schoolfellows increased towards him from day to day. Thady was his patron on all occasions: neither did the Curate neglect him. The latter was his banker, for the boy had very properly committed his purse to his keeping. At the expiration of every quarter the schoolmaster received the amount of his bill, which he never failed to send in, when due.

Jemmy had not, during his first year's residence in the south, forgotten to request the kind Curate's interference with the landlord, on behalf of his father. To be the instrument of restoring his family to their former comfortable holding under Colonel B——,

would have afforded him, without excepting the certainty of his own eventual success, the highest gratification. Of this, however, there was no hope, and nothing remained for him but assiduity in his studies, and patience under the merciless scourge of his teacher. In addition to an engaging person and agreeable manners, nature had gifted him with a high order of intellect, and great powers of acquiring knowledge. The latter he applied to the business before him with indefatigable industry. The school at which he settled was considered the first in Munster; and the master, notwithstanding his known severity, stood high, and justly so, in the opinion of the people, as an excellent classical and mathematical scholar. Jemmy applied himself to the study of both, and at the expiration of his second year had made such progress, that he stood without a rival in the school.

It is usual, as we have said, for the poor scholar to go night after night, in rotation, with his schoolfellows; he is particularly welcome in the houses of those farmers whose children are not so far advanced as himself. It is expected that he should instruct them in the evenings, and enable them to prepare their lessons for the following day, a task which he always performs with pleasure, because in teaching them he is confirming his own mind in the knowledge which he has previously acquired. Towards the end of the second year, however, he ceased to circulate in this manner. Two or three of the most independent parishioners, whose sons were only commencing their studies, agreed to keep him week about; an arrangement highly convenient to him, as by that

means he was not so frequently dragged, as he had been, to the remotest parts of the parish. Being an expert penman, he acted also as secretary of grievances to the poor, who frequently employed him to draw up petitions to obdurate landlords, or to their more obdurate agents, and letters to soldiers in all parts of the world, from their anxious and affectionate relations. All these little services he performed kindly and promptly; many a blessing was fervently invoked upon his head; the "good word" and "the prayer" were all they could afford, as they said, "to the *bouchal dhas oge** that tuck the world an him for sake o' the larnin', an' that hasn't the kindliness o' the mother's breath an' the mother's hand near him, the crathur."

About the middle of the third year he was once more thrown upon the general hospitality of the people. The three farmers with whom he had lived for the preceding six months, emigrated to America, as did many others of that class which, in this country, most nearly approximates to the substantial yeomanry of England. The little purse, too, which he had placed in the hands of the kind priest, was exhausted; a season of famine, sickness, and general distress had set in; and the master, on understanding that he was without money, became diabolically savage. In short, the boy's difficulties increased to a perplexing degree. Even Thady and his grown companions, who usually interposed in his behalf when the master became excessive in correcting him, had left the

* The pretty *young* boy. *Boy* in Ireland does not always imply youth.

school, and now the prospect before him was dark and cheerless indeed. For a few months longer, however, he struggled on, meeting every difficulty with meek endurance. Since his very boyhood he had reverenced the sanctions of religion, and was actuated by a strong devotional spirit. He trusted in God, and worshipped him night and morning with a sincere heart.

At this crisis he was certainly an object of pity; his clothes, which for some time before were reduced to tatters, he had replaced by a cast-off coat and small-clothes, a present from his friend the Curate, who never abandoned him. This worthy young man could not afford him money, for as he had but fifty pounds a-year, with which to clothe, subsist himself, keep a horse, and pay rent, it was hardly to be expected that his benevolence could be extensive. In addition to this, famine and contagious disease raged with formidable violence in the parish; so that the claims upon his bounty of hundreds who lay huddled together in cold cabins, in out-houses, and even behind ditches, were incessant as well as heart-rending. The number of interments that took place daily in the parish was awful; nothing could be seen but funerals attended by groups of ragged and emaciated creatures, from whose hollow eyes gleamed forth the wolfish fire of famine. The wretched mendicants were countless, and the number of coffins that lay on the public roads—where, attended by the nearest relatives of the deceased, they had been placed for the purpose of procuring charity—were greater than ever had been remembered by the oldest inhabitant.

Such was the state of the parish when our poor scholar complained one day in school of severe illness. The early symptoms of the prevailing epidemic were well known, and, on examining more closely into his situation, it was clear that, according to the phraseology of the people, he had "got the faver on his back,"—had caught "a heavy load of the faver." The Irish are particularly apprehensive of contagious maladies. The moment it had been discovered that Jemmy was infected, his schoolfellows avoided him with a feeling of terror scarcely credible, and the inhuman master was delighted at any circumstance, however calamitous, that might afford him a pretext for driving the friendless youth out of the school.

"Take," said he, "every thing belongin' to you out of my establishment: you were always a plague to me, but now more than ever. Be quick, sarra, and nidificate for yourself somewhere else. Do you want to thranslate my siminary into an hospital, and myself into Lazarus, as president? Go off, you wild-goose, and conjugate *ægroto* wherever you find a convenient spot to do it in."

The poor boy silently and with difficulty arose, collected his books, and slinging on his satchel, looked to his school-fellows, as if he had said, "which of you will afford me a place where to lay my aching head?" All, however, kept aloof from him;—he had caught the contagion, and the contagion, they knew, had swept the people away in vast numbers.

At length he spoke—"Is there any boy among you," he inquired, "who will bring me home? You

know I am a stranger, an' far from my own, God help me!"

This was followed by a profound silence. Not one of those who had so often befriended him, or who would, on any other occasion, share their bed and their last morsel with him, would even touch his person, much less allow him, when thus plague-stricken, to take shelter under their roof. Such are the effects of selfishness, when it is opposed only by the force of those natural qualities that are not elevated into a sense of duty by clear and profound views of Christian truth. It is one thing to perform a kind action from constitutional impulse, and another to perform it as a fixed duty, perhaps contrary to that impulse.

Jemmy, on finding himself avoided like a Hebrew leper of old, silently left the school, and walked on without knowing whither he should ultimately direct his steps. He thought of his friend the priest, but the distance between him and his place of abode was greater, he felt, than his illness would permit him to travel. He walked on, therefore, in such a state of misery and dereliction as can scarcely be conceived, much less described. His head ached excessively, an intense pain shot like death-pangs through his lower back and loins, his face was flushed and his head giddy. In this state he proceeded, without money or friends, without a house to shelter him, a bed on which to lie, far from his own relations, and with the prospect of death, under circumstances peculiar dreadful, before him! He tottered on, however, the earth, as he imagined, reeling under him; the hea-

vens, he thought, streaming with fire, and the earth indistinct and discoloured. Home, the paradise of the absent—home, the heaven of the affections—with all its tenderness and blessed sympathies, rushed upon his heart. His father's deep but quiet kindness, his mother's sedulous love; his brothers—all that they had been to him—these, with their thousand heart-stirring associations, started into life before him again and again. But he was now ill, and the mother—ah! the enduring sense of that mother's love placed her brightest, and strongest, and tenderest, in the far and distant group which his imagination bodied forth.

"Mother!" he exclaimed—"oh, mother, why—why did I ever lave you? Mother! the son you loved is dyin' without a kind word—lonely and neglected in a strange land! Oh, my *own* mother! why did I ever lave you?"

The conflict between his illness and his affections overcame him: he staggered—he grasped as if for assistance at the vacant air—he fell, and lay for some time in a state of insensibility.

The season was then that of midsummer, and early meadows were falling before the scythe. As the boy sank to the earth, a few labourers were eating their scanty dinner of bread and milk so near him, that only a dry low ditch ran between him and them. They had heard his words indistinctly, and one of them was putting the milk bottle to his lips, when attracted by the voice, he looked in the direction of the speaker, and saw him fall. They immediately recognised "the poor scholar," and in a moment were attempting to recover him.

" Why thin, my poor fellow, what's *a shaughran* wid you?"

Jemmy started for a moment, looked about him, and asked, " Where am I?"

" Faitha, thin you're in Rory Connor's field, widin a few perches of the high-road. But what ails you, poor boy?—is it sick you are?"

" It is," he replied; " I have got the faver. I had to lave school; none o' them would take me home, an' I doubt I must die in a Christian counthry, undher the open canopy of heaven. Oh, for God's sake, don't lave me! Bring me to some hospital, or into the next town, where people may know that I'm sick, an' maybe some kind Christian will relieve me!"

The moment he mentioned " Fever," the men involuntarily drew back, after having laid him reclining against the green ditch.

" Thin, thundher an' turf, what's to be done?" exclaimed one of them, thrusting his spread fingers into his hair. " Is the poor boy to die widout help among Christyeens like uz?"

" But hasn't he the sickness?" exclaimed another: " an' in that case, Pether, what's to be done?"

" Why, you gommoch, isn't that what I'm wantin' to know? You wor ever an' always a dam' ass, Paddy, except before you wor born, an' thin you wor like Major M'Curragh, worse nor nothin'. Why the sarra do you be spakin' about the sickness, the Lord protect us, whin you know I'm so timersome of it?"

" But considher," said another, edging off from Jemmy, however, " that he's a poor scholar, an' that

there's a great blessin' to thim that assists the likes of him."

"Ay is there that, sure enough, Dan; but you see —blur-an-age, what's to be done? He can't die this a-way, wid nobody wid him but himself."

"Let us help him!" exclaimed another, "for *God's* sake, an' we won't be apt to take it thin."

"Ay, but how can we help him, Frank? Oh, bedad, it 'ud be a murdherin' shame, all out, to let the crathur die by himself, widout company, so it would."

"No one will take him in, for fraid o' the sickness. Why, I'll tell you what we'll do:—Let us shkame the remainder o' this day off o' the Major, an' build a shed for him on the road-side here, jist against the ditch. It's as dhry as powdher. Thin we can go through the neighbours, an' get thim to sit near him time about, an' to bring him little dhreeniens o' nourishment."

"Divil a purtier! Come thin, let us get a lot o' the neighbours, an' set about it, poor bouchal. Who knows but it may bring down a blessin' upon us, aither in this world or the next."

"Amin! I pray Gorra! an' so it will sure! doesn't the Catechiz say it? 'There is but one Church,' says the Catechiz, 'one Faith, an' one Baptism.' Bedad, there's a power o' fine larnin' in the same Catechiz, so there is, an' mighty improvin'."

An Irishman never works for wages with half the zeal which he displays when working *con amore*. Ere many hours passed, a number of the neighbours had assembled, and Jemmy found himself on a bunch

of clean straw, in a little shed erected for him at the edge of the road.

Perhaps it would be impossible to conceive a more gloomy state of misery than that in which young M'Evoy found himself. Stretched on the side of the public road, in a shed formed of a few loose sticks covered over with "scraws," that is, the sward of the earth pared into thin stripes—removed above fifty perches from any human habitation—his body racked with a furious and oppressive fever—his mind conscious of all the horrors by which he was surrounded —without the comforts even of a bed or bed-clothes—and, what was worst of all, those from whom he might expect kindness, afraid to approach him! Lying helpless, under these circumstances, it ought not to be wondered at, if he wished that death might at once close his extraordinary sufferings, and terminate those struggles which filial piety had prompted him to encounter.

This certainly is a dark picture, but our humble hero knew that even there the power and goodness of God could support him. The boy trusted in God; and when removed into his little shed, and stretched upon his clean straw, he felt that his situation was, in good sooth, comfortable when contrasted with what it might have been, if left to perish behind a ditch, exposed to the scorching heat of the sun by day, and the dews of heaven by night. He felt the hand of God even in this, and placed himself, with a short but fervent prayer, under his fatherly protection.

Irishmen, however, are not just that description of persons who can pursue their usual avocations, and see

a fellow-creature die, without such attentions as they can afford him; not precisely so bad as that, gentle reader! Jemmy had not been two hours on his straw, when a second shed much larger than his own, was raised within a dozen yards of it. In this a fire was lit; a small pot was then procured, milk was sent in, and such other little comforts brought together, as they supposed necessary for the sick boy. Having accomplished these matters, a kind of guard was set to watch and nurse-tend him; a pitchfork was got, on the prongs of which they intended to reach him bread across the ditch; and a long-shafted shovel was borrowed, on which to furnish him drink with safety to themselves. That inextinguishable vein of humour, which in Ireland mingles even with death and calamity, was also visible here. The ragged half-starved creatures laughed heartily at the oddity of their own inventions, and enjoyed the ingenuity with which they made shift to meet the exigencies of the occasion, without in the slightest degree having their sympathy and concern for the afflicted youth lessened.

When their arrangements were completed, one of them (he of the scythe) made a little whey, which, in lieu of a spoon, he stirred with the end of his tobacco knife; he then extended it across the ditch upon the shovel, after having put it in a tin porringer.

"Do you want a taste o' whay, avourneen?"

"Oh, I do," replied Jemmy; "give me a drink for God's sake."

"There it is, a bouchal, on the shovel. Musha if myself rightly knows what side you're lyin' an, or I'd

put it as near your lips as I could. Come, man, be stout, don't be cast down at all at all; sure, bud-an-age, we're shovelin' the whay to you, any how."

"I have it," replied the boy—"oh, I have it. May God never forget this to you, whoever you are."

"Faith, if you want to know who I am, I'm Pether Connor the mower, that never seen to-morrow. Be Gorra, poor boy, you mustn't let your spirits down at all at all. Sure the neighbours is all bint to watch an' take care of you.—May I take away the shovel?—an' they've built a brave snug shed here beside yours, where they'll stay wid you time about until you get well. We'll feed you wid whay enough, bekase we've made up our minds to stale lots o' sweet milk for you. Ned Branagan an' I will milk Rody Hartigan's cows to-night, wid the help o' God. Divil a bit sin in it, so there isn't, an' if there is, too, be my sowl there's no harm in it any way—for he's but a nager himself, the same Rody. So, acushla, keep a light heart, for, be Gorra, you're sure o' the thin pair o' throwsers, any how. Don't think you're desarted—for you're not. It's all in regard o' bein' afeard o' this faver, or it's not this way you'd be; but, as I said a while agone, when you want any thing, spake, for you'll still find two or three of us beside you here, night an' day. Now won't you promise to keep your mind asy, when you know that we're beside you?"

"God bless you," replied Jemmy, "you've taken a weight off of my heart. I thought I'd die wid nobody near me at all."

"Oh, the sorra fear of it. Keep your heart up. We'll stale lots o' milk for you. Bad scran to the

baste in the parish but we'll milk, sooner nor you'd want the whay, you crathur you."

The boy felt relieved, but his malady increased; and were it not that the confidence of being thus watched and attended to, supported him, it is more than probable he would have sunk under it.

When the hour of closing the day's labour arrived, Major —— came down to inspect the progress which his mowers had made, and the goodness of the crop upon his meadows. No sooner was he perceived at a distance, than the scythes were instantly resumed, and the mowers pursued their employment with an appearance of zeal and honesty that could not be suspected.

On arriving at the meadows, however, he was evidently startled at the miserable day's work they had performed.

"Why, Connor," said he, addressing the nurse-tender, "how is this? I protest you have not performed half a day's labour! This is miserable and shameful."

"Bedad, Major, it's thrue for your honour, sure enough. It's a poor day's work, the never a doubt of it. But be all the books that never was opened or shut, busier men nor we wor since mornin' couldn't be had for love or money. You see, Major, these meadows—bad luck to them!—God pardon me for cursin' the harmless crathurs, for sure 'tisn't their fau't, Sir; but you see, Major, I'll insinse you into it. Now look here, your honour. Did you ever see deeper meadow, nor that same, since you war foal—hem—since you war born, your honour? Maybe,

your honour, Major, 'ud just take the scythe an' sthrive to cut a swaythe?"

"Nonsense, Connor; don't you know I cannot."

"Thin, be Gorra, Sir, I wisht you could thry it. I'd kiss the book, we did more labour, an' worked harder this day, nor any day for the last fortnight. If it was light grass, Sir—see here, Major, here's a light bit—now, look at how the scythe runs through it! Thin look at here agin—jist observe this, Major—why, murdher alive, don't you see how slow she goes through *that* where the grass is *heavy!* Bedad, Major, you'll be made up this sason wid your hay, any how. Divil carry the finer meadow ever I put scythe in nor the same meadow, God bless it!"

"Yes, I see it, Connor. I agree with you as to its goodness. But the reason of that is, Connor, that I always direct my steward myself in laying it down for grass. Yes, you're right, Connor; if the meadow were light, you could certainly mow comparatively a greater space in a day."

"Be the livin' farmer, God pardon me for swearin', it's a pleasure to have dalins wid a gintleman like you, that knows things as cute as if you war a mower yourself, your honour. Bedad, I'll go bail, Sir, it wouldn't be hard to tache you that same."

"Why, to tell you the truth, Connor, you have hit me off pretty well. I'm beginning to get a taste for agriculture."

"But," said Connor, scratching his head, "won't your honour allow us the price of a glass, or a pint o' porther, for our hard day's work. Bad cess to me, Sir, but this meadow 'ill play the puck wid us afore

we get it finished. Atween ourselves, Sir — if it wouldn't be takin' freedoms—if you'd look to *your own* farmin' *yourself*. The steward, Sir, is a dacent kind of a man, but, sowl, he couldn't hould a candle to your honour in seein' to the best way of doing a thing, Sir. Won't you allow us glasses a-piece, your honour? Faix, we're kilt entirely, so we are."

"Here is half-a-crown among you, Connor; but don't get drunk."

"Dhrunk! Musha, long may you reign, Sir! Be the scythe in my hand, I'd rather—och, faix you're one o' the ould sort, Sir—the raal Irish gintleman, your honour. An' sure your name 's far an' near for that, any how."

Connor's face would have done the heart of Brooke or Cruikshank good, had either of them seen it charged with humour so rich as that which beamed from it, when the Major left them to enjoy their own comments upon what had happened.

"Oh, be the livin' farmer," said Connor, "are we alive at all afther *doin'* the Major! Oh, thin, the curse o' the crows upon you, Major darlin', but you are a *Manus!* The damn' rip o' the world, that wouldn't give the breath he breathes to the poor for God's sake, an' he'll *threwn* a man half-a-crown that'll blarney him for farmin', an' him doesn't know the differ atween a Cork-red an' a Yallow-leg!"

"Faith he's the boy that knows how to make a Judy of himself, any way, Pether," exclaimed another. "The devil a hapurth asier nor to give these Quality the bag to hould, so there isn't—an' they think themselves so cute, too!"

"Augh!" said a third, "couldn't a man find the soft side o' them, as asy as make out the way to his own nose widout bein' led to it. Devil a sin it is to *do them*, any way. Sure he thinks we wor tooth an' nail at the meadow all day; an' me thought I'd never recover it, to see Pether here—the rise he tuck out of him! Ha, ha, ha—och, och—murdher, oh!"

"Faith," exclaimed Connor, "'twas good, you see, to help the poor scholar; only for it we couldn't get shkamin' the half-crown out of him. I think we ought to give the crathur half of it, an' him so sick—he'll be wantin' it worse nor ourselves."

"Oh, be Gorra, he's fairly entitled to that. I vote him fifteen pince."

"Surely!" they exclaimed unanimously—"tundher-an'-turf, wasn't he the manes of gettin' it for us?"

"Jemmy, a bouchal," said Connor, across the ditch to M'Evoy, "are you sleepin'?"

"Sleepin'! Oh, no," replied Jemmy, "I'd give the wide world for one wink of asy sleep."

"Well, aroon, here's fifteen pince for you, that we shkam—will I tell him how we got it?"

"No don't," replied his neighbours, "the boy's given to devotion, an', maybe, might scruple to take it."

"Here's fifteen pince, avourneen, on the shovel, that we're givin' you *for God's sake*. If you *over* * this, won't you offer up a prayer for us? Won't you, avick?"

"I can never forget your kindness," replied Jemmy;

* That is—to get over—to survive.

"I will always pray for you, an' may God for ever bless you an' yours."

"Poor crathur! May the heavens above have prosthration on him. Upon my sowl, it's good to have his blessin' an' his prayer. Now don't fret, Jemmy; we're lavin' you wid a lot o' neighbours here. They'll watch you time about, so that whin you want any thing, call, avourneen, an' there'll still be some one here to answer. God bless you, an' restore you, till we come wid the milk we'll stale for you, wid the help o' God. Bad cess to me, but it 'ud be a mortual sin, so it would, to let the poor boy die at all, an' him so far from home. For, as the Catechiz says, 'There is but one Faith, one Church, and one Baptism!' Well, the readin' that's in that Catechiz is mighty improvin', glory be to God!"

It would be utterly impossible to detail the affliction which our poor scholar suffered in this wretched shed, for the space of a fortnight, notwithstanding the efforts of those kind-hearted people to render his situation comfortable.

The little wigwam they had constructed near him, was never, even for a moment, during his whole illness, without two or three persons ready to attend him. In the evening their numbers increased; a fire was always kept burning, over which a little pot for making whey or gruel was suspended. At night they amused each other with anecdotes and laughter, and occasionally with songs, when certain that their patient was not asleep. Their excursions to steal milk for him were performed with uncommon glee, and related among themselves with great humour.

These thefts would have been unnecessary, had not the famine which then prevailed through the province been so excessive. The crowds that swarmed about the houses of wealthy farmers, supplicating a morsel to keep body and soul together, resembled nothing which our English readers ever had an opportunity of seeing. Ragged, emaciated creatures, tottered about with an expression of wildness and voracity in their gaunt features; fathers and mothers reeled under the burthen of their beloved children, the latter either sick, or literally expiring for want of food; and the widow, in many instances, was compelled to lay down her head to die, with the wail, the feeble wail, of her withered orphans mingling with her last moans! In such a state of things it was difficult to procure a sufficient quantity of milk to allay the unnatural thirst even of one individual, when parched by the scorching heat of a fever. Notwithstanding this, his wants were for the most part anticipated, so far as their means would allow them; his shed was kept waterproof; and either shovel or pitchfork always ready to be extended to him, by way of substitution for the right hand of fellowship.

When he called for any thing, the usual observation was, "Husht! the crathur's callin'; I must take the shovel an' see what he wants."

There were times, it is true, when the mirth of the poor fellows was very low, for hunger was generally among themselves; there were times when their own little shed presented a touching and melancholy spectacle—perhaps we ought also to add, a noble one; for, to contemplate a number of men, considered rude and

semi-barbarous, devoting themselves, in the midst of privations the most cutting and oppressive, to the care and preservation of a strange lad, merely because they knew him to be without friends and protection, is to witness a display of virtue truly magnanimous. The food on which some of the persons were occasionally compelled to live, was blood boiled up with a little oatmeal; for when a season of famine occurs in Ireland, the people usually bleed the cows and bullocks to preserve themselves from actual starvation. It is truly a sight of appalling misery to behold feeble women gliding across the country, carrying their cans and pitchers, actually trampling upon fertility and fatness, and collected in the corner of some grazier's farm, waiting, gaunt and ravenous as Gouls, for their portion of blood. During these melancholy periods of want, every thing in the shape of an esculent disappears. The miserable creatures will pick up chickenweed, nettles, sorrell, bugloss, preshagh, and seaweed, which they will boil and eat with the voracity of persons writhing under the united agonies of hunger and death! Yet, singular to say, the very country thus groaning under such a terrible sweep of famine is actually pouring from all her ports a profusion of food, day after day; flinging it from her fertile bosom, with the wanton excess of a prodigal oppressed by abundance.

Despite, however, of all that the poor scholar's nurse-guard suffered, he was attended with a fidelity of care and sympathy which no calamity could shake. Nor was this care fruitless; after the fever had passed through its usual stages, he began to recover. In

fact, it has been observed very truly, that scarcely any person has been known to die under circumstances similar to those of the poor scholar. These sheds, the erection of which is not unfrequent in case of fever, have the advantage of pure free air, by which the patient is cooled and refreshed. Be the cause of it what it may, the fact has been established, and we feel satisfaction in being able to adduce our humble hero as an additional proof of the many recoveries which take place in situations apparently so unfavourable to human life. But how is it possible to detail what M'Evoy suffered during this fortnight of intense agony? Not those who can command the luxuries of life—not those who can reach its comforts—nor those who can supply themselves with its bare necessaries—neither the cotter who struggles to support his wife and helpless children—the mendicant who begs from door to door—nor even the felon in his cell—can imagine what he felt in the solitary misery of his feverish bed. Hard is the heart that cannot *feel* his sorrows, when, stretched beside the common way, without a human face to look on, he called upon the mother whose brain, had she known his situation, would have been riven—whose affectionate heart would have been broken by the knowledge of his affliction. It was a situation which afterwards appeared to him dark and terrible. The pencil of the painter could not depict it, nor the pen of the poet describe it, except like a dim vision, which neither the heart nor the imagination are able to give to the world as a tale steeped in the sympathies excited by reality.

His whole heart and soul, as he afterwards acknow-

ledged, were, during his trying illness, *at home*. The voices of his parents, of his sisters, and of his brothers, were always in his ears; their countenances surrounded his cold and lonely shed; their hands touched him; their eyes looked upon him in sorrow —and their tears bedewed him. Even there, the light of his mother's love, though she herself was distant, shone upon his sorrowful couch; and he has declared, that in no past moment of affection did his soul ever burn with a sense of its presence so strongly as it did in the heart-dreams of his severest illness. But God is love, "and tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

Much of all his sufferings would have been alleviated, were it not that his two best friends in the parish, Thady and the curate, had been both prostrated by the fever at the same time with himself. There was consequently no person of respectability in the neighbourhood cognizant of his situation. He was left to the humbler class of the peasantry, and honourably did they, with all their errors and ignorances, discharge those duties which greater wealth and greater knowledge would, probably, have left unperformed.

On the morning of the last day he ever intended to spend in the shed, at eleven o'clock, he heard the sounds of horses' feet passing along the road. The circumstance was one quite familiar to him; but these horsemen, whoever they might be, stopped, and immediately after, two respectable looking men, dressed in black, approached him. His forlorn state and frightfully-wasted appearance startled them, and the

younger of the two asked, in a tone of voice which went directly to his heart, how it was that they found him in a situation so desolate.

The kind interest implied by the words, and probably a sense of his utterly destitute state, affected him strongly, and he burst into tears. The strangers looked at each other, then at him; and if looks could express sympathy, theirs expressed it.

"My good boy," said the first, "how is it that we find you in a situation so deplorable and wretched as this? Who are you, or why is it that you have not a friendly roof to shelter you?"

"I'm a poor scholar," replied Jemmy, "the son of honest but reduced parents: I came to this part of the country with the intention of preparing myself for Maynooth, and, if it might plase God, with the hope of being able to raise them out of their distress."

The strangers looked more earnestly at the boy; sickness had touched his fine intellectual features into a purity of expression almost ethereal. His fair skin appeared nearly transparent, and the light of truth and candour lit up his countenance with a lustre which affliction could not dim.

The other stranger approached him more nearly, stooped for a moment, and felt his pulse.

"How long have you been in this country?" he inquired.

"Nearly three years."

"You have been ill of the fever which is so prevalent; but how did you come to be left to the chance of perishing upon the highway?"

"Why, Sir, the people were afeard to let me into

their houses in consequence of the faver. I got ill in school, Sir, but no boy would venture to bring me home, an' the master turned me out, to die, I believe. May God forgive him!"

"Who was your master, my child?"

"The great Mr. ———, Sir. If Mr. O'Brien, the curate of the parish, hadn't been ill himself at the same time, or if Mr. O'Rorke's son, Thady, hadn't been laid on his back, too, Sir, I wouldn't suffer what I did."

"Has the curate been kind to you?"

"Sir, only for him and the big boys I couldn't stay in the school, on account of the master's cruelty, particularly since my money was out."

"You are better now—are you not?" said the other gentleman.

"Thank God, Sir!—oh, thanks be to the Almighty, I am! I expect to be able to lave this place to-day or to-morrow."

"And where do you intend to go when you recover?"

The boy himself had not thought of this, and the question came on him so unexpectedly, that he could only reply—

"Indeed, Sir, I don't know."

"Had you," inquired the second stranger, "testimonials from your parish priest?"

"I had, Sir: they are in the hands of Mr. O'Brien. I also had a character from my father's landlord."

"But how," asked the other, "have you existed here during your illness? Have you been long sick?"

"Indeed I can't tell you, Sir, for I don't know how the time passed at all; but I know, Sir, that there

were always two or three people attendin' me. They sent me whatever they thought I wanted, upon a shovel or a pitchfork, across the ditch, because they were afraid to come near me."

During the early part of the dialogue, two or three old hats, or caubeens, might have been seen moving steadily over from the wigwam to the ditch which ran beside the shed occupied by M'Evoy. Here they remained stationary, for those who wore them were now within hearing of the conversation, and ready to give their convalescent patient a good word, should it be necessary.

"How were you supplied with drink and medicine?" asked the younger stranger.

"As I've just told you, Sir," replied Jemmy, "the neighbours here let me want for nothing that they had. They kept me in more whey than I could use; and they got me medicine, too, some way or other. But indeed, Sir, during a great part of the time I was ill, I can't say how they attended me: I wasn't sensible, Sir, of what was goin' on about me."

One of those who lay behind the ditch now arose, and after a few hems and scratchings of the head, ventured to join in the conversation.

"Pray have you, my man," said the elder of the two, "been acquainted with the circumstances of this boy's illness?"

"Is it the poor scholar, my Lord?* Oh thin bedad it's myself that has that. The poor crathur was in a terrible way all out, so he was. He caught the faver

* The peasantry always address a Roman Catholic Bishop as "My Lord."

in the school beyant, one day, an' was turned out by the nager o' the world that he was larnin' from."

"Are you one of the persons who attended him?"

"Och, och, the crathur! what could unsignified people like us do for him, barrin' a thrifle? Any how, my Lord, it's the meracle o' the world that he was ever able to *over* it at all. Why, Sir, good luck to the one of him but suffered as much, wid the help o' God, as 'ud overcome fifty men!"

"How did you provide him with drink at such a distance from any human habitation?"

"Throth, hard enough we found it, Sir, to do that same; but sure, whether or not, my Lord, we couldn't be sich nagers as to let him die all out, for want o' somethin' to moisten his throath wid."

"I hope," inquired the other, "you had nothing to do in the milk-stealing which has produced such an outcry in this immediate neighbourhood?"

"Milk-stalin'! Oh, bedad, Sir, there never was the likes known afore in the counthry. The Lord forgive them that did it! Be gorra, Sir, the wickedness o' the people's mighty improvin', if one 'ud take warnin' by it, glory be to God!"

"Many of the farmer's cows have been milked at night, Connor,—perfectly drained—even my own cows have not escaped; and we who have suffered are certainly determined, if possible, to ascertain those who have committed the theft. I, for my part, have gone even beyond my ability in relieving the wants of the poor, during this period of sickness and famine; I therefore deserved this the less."

"By the powdhers, your honour, if any gintleman

desarved to have his cows *unmilked*, it's yourself. But, as I said this minute, there's no end to the wickedness o' the people, so there's not, although the Catechiz is against them—for, says it, 'there is but one Faith, one Church, an' one Baptism.' Now, Sir, isn't it quare that people, wid sich words in the book afore them, won't be guided by it? I suppose they thought it only a *white* sin, Sir, to take the milk, the thieves o' the world."

"Maybe, your honour," said another, "that it was only to keep the life in some poor sick crathur that wanted it more nor you or the farmers, that they did it. There's some o' the same farmers desarve worse, for they're keepin' up the prices o' their male an' praties upon the poor, an' did so all along, that they might make money by our outher distitution."

"That is no justification for theft," observed the graver of the two. "Does any one among you suspect those who committed it in this instance? If you do, I command you, as your Bishop, to mention them."

"How, for instance," added the other, "were you able to supply this sick boy with whey during his illness?"

"Oh thin, gintlemen," replied Connor, dexterously parrying the question, "but it's a mighty improvin' thing to see our own Bishop,—God spare his Lordship to us!—an' the Protestant minister o' the parish joinin' together to relieve an' give good advice to the poor! Bedad it's settin' a fine example, so it is, to the Quality, if they'd take patthern by it."

"Reply," said the Bishop, rather sternly, "to the questions we have asked you."

"The quistions, your Lordship? It's proud an' happy we'd be to do what you want; but the sarra man among us *can* do it, barrin' we'd say what we *ought not* to say. That's the truth, my Lord; an' surely 'tisn't your Gracious Reverence that 'ud want us to go beyant it?"

"Certainly not," replied the Bishop. "I warn you against both falsehood and fraud,—two charges which might frequently be brought against you in your intercourse with the gentry of the country whom you seldom scruple to deceive and mislead, by gliding into a character, when speaking to them, that is often the reverse of your real one; whilst, at the same time, you are both honest and sincere to persons of your own class. Put away this practice, for it is both sinful and discreditable."

"God bless your Lordship! an' many thanks to your Gracious Reverence, for advisin' us! Well we know that it's the blessed thing to folly your words."

"Bring over that naked, starved-looking man, who is stirring the fire under that pot," said the Rector—"he looks like famine itself."

"Paddy Dunn, will you come over here to his honour, Paddy! He's goin' to give you somethin'," said Connor, adding of his own accord the last clause of the message.

The tattered creature approached him with a gleam of expectation in his eyes that appeared like insanity.

"God bless your honour for your goodness!" exclaimed Paddy. "It's me that's in it, Sir!—Paddy Dunn, Sir, sure enough; but indeed I'm the next thing to my own ghost, Sir, now—God help me!"

" What, and for whom, are you cooking?"

" Jist the smallest dhrop in life, Sir, o' gruel, to keep the sowl in that lonely crathur, Sir, the poor scholar."

" Pray how long is it since you have eaten any thing yourself?"

The tears burst from the eyes of the miserable creature as he replied—

" Before God in glory, your honour, an' in the presence of his Lordship here, I only got about what 'ud make betther nor half a male widin the last day, Sir. 'Twas a weeshy grain o' male that I got from a friend; an' as Ned Connor here tould me that this crathur had nothin' to make the gruel for him, why I shared it wid him, bekase he couldn't even beg it, Sir, if he wanted it, an' him not able to walk yit."

The worthy pastor's eyes glistened with a moisture that did him honour. Without a word of observation he slipped a crown into the hand of Dunn, who looked at it as if he had been paralyzed.

" Oh thin," said he, fervently, " may every hair on your honour's head become a mould-candle to light you into glory! The world's goodness is in your heart, Sir; an' may all the blessin's of heaven rain down upon you an' yours!"

The two gentlemen then gave assistance to the poor scholar, whom the Bishop addressed in kind and encouraging language:—

" Come to me, my good boy," he added, " and if, on further inquiry, I find that your conduct has been such as I believe it to have been, you may rest assured, provided also you *continue* worthy of my good opinion,

that I shall be a friend and a protector to you. Call on me when you get well, and I will speak to you at greater length."

"Well," observed Connor, when they were gone, "the divil's own hard puzzle the Bishop had me in, about stalin' the milk. It wint agin the grain wid me to tell *him* the lie, so I had to invint a bit o' truth, to keep my conscience clear; for sure there was *not* a man among us that *could* tell him, barrin' we said what we *oughtn't* to say. Doesn't all the world know that a man oughtn't to condimn himself. That was *thruth*, any way; but divil a scruple I'd have in *bammin'* the other—not but that he's one o' the best of his sort. Paddy Dunn, quit lookin' at that crown, but get the shovel an' give the boy his dhrink—he's wantin' it."

The agitation of spirits produced by Jemmy's cheering interview with the Bishop, was, for two or three days afterwards, somewhat prejudicial to his convalescence. In less than a week, however, he was comfortably settled with Mr. O'Rorke's family, whose kindness proved to him quite as warm as he had expected.

When he had remained with them a few days, he resolved to recommence his studies under his tyrant master. He certainly knew that his future attendance at the school would be penal to him, but he had always looked forward to the accomplishment of his hopes as a task of difficulty and distress. The severity to be expected from the master, could not, he thought, be greater than that which he had already suffered; he therefore decided, if possible, to complete his education under him.

The school, when Jemmy appeared in it, had been for more than an hour assembled, but the thinness of the attendance not only proved the woful prevalence of sickness and distress in the parish, but sharpened the pedagogue's vinegar aspect into an expression of countenance singularly peevish and gloomy. When the lad entered, a murmur of pleasure and welcome ran through the scholars, and joy beamed forth from every countenance but that of his teacher. When the latter noticed this, his irritability rose above restraint, and he exclaimed—

"Silence! and apply to business, or I shall cause some of you to denude immediately. No school ever can prosper in which that *hirudo*, called a poor scholar, is permitted toleration. I thought, Sarrah, I told you to nidificate, and hatch your wild project undher some other wing than mine."

"I only entrate you," replied our poor hero, "to suffer me to join the class I left while I was sick, for about another year. I'll be very quiet and humble, and, as far as I can, will do every thing you wish me."

"Ah! you are a crawling reptile," replied the savage, "and, in my opinion, nothing but a chate and impostor. I think you have imposed yourself upon Mr. O'Brien for what you are not—that is, the son of an honest man. I have no doubt but many of your nearest relations died after having seen their own funerals. Your mother, you runagate, wasn't your father's wife, I'll be bail."

The spirit of the boy could bear this no longer; his eyes flashed, and his sinews stood out in the energy of deep indignation.

"It is false," he exclaimed, "it is as false as your own cruel and cowardly heart, you wicked and unprincipled tyrant! In every thing you have said of my father, mother, and friends, and of myself, too, you are a liar, from the hat on your head to the dirt undher your feet—a liar, a coward, and a villain!"

The fury of the miscreant was ungovernable: he ran at the still feeble lad, and, by a stroke of his fist, dashed him senseless to the earth. There were now no large boys in the school to curb his resentment, he therefore kicked him in the back when he fell. Many voices exclaimed in alarm—"Oh! masther, Sir, don't kill him! Oh! Sir dear, don't kill him! Don't kill poor Jemmy, Sir, an' him still sick!"

"Kill him!" replied the master—"kill him, indeed! Faith, he'd be no common man who could kill him; he has as many lives in him as a cat! Sure he can live behind a ditch, wid the faver on his back, widout dying; and he would live if he was stuck on the spire of a steeple."

In the mean time the boy gave no symptoms of returning life, and the master, after desiring a few of the scholars to bring him out to the air, became pale as death with apprehension. He immediately withdrew to his private apartment, which joined the school-room, and sent out his wife to assist in restoring him to animation. With some difficulty this was accomplished. The unhappy boy at once remembered what had just occurred, and the bitter tears gushed from his eyes, as he knelt down and exclaimed, "Merciful Father of heaven and earth, have pity on me! You

see my heart, great God! and that what I did, I did for the best!"

"Avourneen," said the woman, "he's passionate, an' never mind him. Come in an' beg his pardon for callin' him a liar, an' I'll become spokesman for you myself. Come, acushla, an' I'll get lave for you to stay in the school still."

"Oh, I'm hurted!" said the poor youth—"I'm hurted inwardly — somewhere about the back and about my ribs!" The pain he felt brought the tears down his pale cheeks. "I wish I was at home!" said he. "I'll give up all and go home!" The lonely boy then laid his head upon his hands, as he sat on the ground, and indulged in a long burst of sorrow.

"Well," said a manly-looking little fellow, whilst the tears stood in his eyes, "I'll tell my father this, any how. I know he won't let me come to this school any more. Here, Jemmy, is a piece of my bread, maybe it will do you good."

"I couldn't taste it, Frank, dear," said Jemmy; "God bless you! but I couldn't taste it."

"Do," said Frank; "maybe it will bate back the pain."

"Don't ask me, Frank, dear," said Jemmy; "I couldn't ate it; I'm hurted inwardly."

"Bad luck to me!" exclaimed the indignant boy, "if ever my ten toes will darken this school door agin. By the livin' farmer, if they ax me at home to do it, I'll run away to my uncle's, so I will. Wait, Jemmy. I'll be big yet; an' be the blessed Gospel that's about my neck, I'll give the same masther a shirtful of sore bones, the holy an' blessed minute I'm able to do it."

Many of the other boys declared that they would acquaint their friends with the master's cruelty to the poor scholar; but Jemmy requested them not to do so, and said that he was determined to return home the moment he should be able to travel.

The affrighted woman could not prevail upon him to seek a reconciliation with her husband, although the expressions of the other scholars induced her to press him to it, even to entreaty. Jemmy arose, and with considerable difficulty reached the Curate's house, found him at home, and, with tears in his eyes, related to him the atrocious conduct of the master.

"Very well," said this excellent man, "I am glad that I can venture to ride as far as Colonel B———'s to-morrow. You must accompany me; for decidedly such brutality cannot be permitted to go unpunished."

Jemmy knew that the Curate was his friend; and, although he would not himself have thought of summoning the master to answer for his barbarity, yet he acquiesced in the Curate's opinion. He stopped that night in the house of the worthy man to whom Mr. O'Brien had recommended him on his first entering the town. It appeared in the morning, however, that he was unable to walk; the blows which he had received were *then* felt by him to be more dangerous than had been supposed. Mr. O'Brien, on being informed of this, procured a jaunting car, on which they both sat, and, at an easy pace, reached the Colonel's residence.

The Curate was shown into an ante-room, and Jemmy sat in the hall: the Colonel joined the former

in a few minutes. He had been in England and on the Continent, accompanied by his family, for nearly the last three years, but had just returned, in order to take possession of a large property in land and money, to which he succeeded at a very critical moment, for his own estates were heavily encumbered. He was now proprietor of an additional estate, the rent roll of which was six thousand per annum, and also master of eighty-five thousand pounds in the funds

Mr. O'Brien, after congratulating him upon his good fortune, introduced the case of our hero as one which, in his opinion, called for the Colonel's interposition as a magistrate.

"I have applied to you, Sir," he proceeded, "rather than to any other of the neighbouring gentlemen, because I think this friendless lad has a peculiar claim upon any good offices you could render him."

"A claim upon me! how is that, Mr. O'Brien?"

"The boy, Sir, is not a native of this province. His father was formerly a tenant of yours, a man, as I have reason to believe, remarkable for good conduct and industry. It appears that his circumstances, so long as he was your tenant, were those of a comfortable independent farmer. If the story which his son relates be true—and I, for one, believe it—his family have been dealt with in a manner unusually cruel and iniquitous. Your present agent, Colonel, who is known in his own neighbourhood by the nickname of *Yellow Sam*, thrust him out of his farm, when his wife was sick, for the purpose of putting into it a man who had married his illegitimate daughter. If this be found a correct account of the transaction, I have no

hesitation in saying, that you, Colonel B——, as a gentleman of honour and humanity, will investigate the conduct of your agent, and see justice done to an honest man, who must have been oppressed in your name, and under colour of your authority."

"If my agent has dared to be unjust to a worthy tenant," said the Colonel, "in order to provide for his bastard, by my sacred honour, he shall cease to be an agent of mine! I admit, certainly, that from some circumstances which transpired a few years ago, I have reason to suspect his integrity. That, to be sure, was only so far as he and I were concerned; but, on the other hand, during one or two visits I made to the estate which he manages, I heard the tenants thank and praise him with much gratitude, and all that sort of thing. There was 'thank your honour'—'long may you reign over us, Sir'—and, 'oh, Colonel, you've a mighty good man to your agent,' and so forth. I do not think Mr. O'Brien that he has acted so harshly, or that he would dare to do it. Upon my honour, I heard those warm expressions of gratitude from the lips of the tenants themselves."

"If you knew the people in general, Colonel, so well as I do," replied the Curate, "you would admit that such expressions are often either cuttingly ironical, or the result of fear. You will always find, Sir, that the independent portion of the people have least of this forced dissimulation among them. A dishonest and inhuman agent has in his own hands the irresponsible power of harassing and oppressing the tenantry under him. The class most hateful to the

people, are those low wretches who spring up from nothing into wealth, accumulated by dishonesty and rapacity. They are proud, overbearing, and jealous, even to vindictiveness, of the least want of respect. It is to such upstarts that the poorer classes are externally most civil; but it is also such persons whom they most hate and abhor. They flatter them to their faces, 'tis true, even to *nausea;* but they seldom spare them in their absence. Of this very class, I believe, is your agent, Yellow Sam; so that any favourable expressions you may have heard from your tenantry towards him, were most probably the result of dissimulation and fear. Besides, Sir, here is a testimonial from M'Evoy's parish priest, in which his father is spoken of as an honest, moral, and industrious man."

"If what you say, Mr. O'Brien, be correct," observed the Colonel, "you know the Irish peasantry much better than I do. Decidedly, I have always thought them in conversation exceedingly candid and sincere. With respect to testimonials from priests to landlords in behalf of their tenants, upon my honour, I am sick of them. I actually received, about four years ago, such an excellent character of two tenants, as induced me to suppose them worthy of encouragement. But what was the fact? Why, Sir, they were two of the greatest firebrands on my estate, and put both me and my agent to great trouble and expense. No, Sir, I wouldn't give a curse for a priest's testimonials, upon such an occasion. These fellows were subsequently convicted of arson on the clearest evidence, and transported."

"Well, Sir, I grant that you may have been misled

in that instance. However, from what I have observed, the two great faults of Irish landlords are these:—In the first place, they suffer themselves to remain ignorant of their tenantry; so much so, indeed, that they frequently deny them access and redress when the poor people are anxious to acquaint them with their grievances; for it is usual with landlords to refer them to those very agents against whose cruelty and rapacity they are appealing. This is a *carte blanche* to the agent to trample upon them if he pleases. In the next place, Irish landlords too frequently employ ignorant and needy men to manage their estates; men who have no character, no property, or standing in society, beyond the reputation of being keen, shrewd, and active. These persons, Sir, make fortunes; and what means can they have of accumulating wealth, except by cheating either the landlord or his tenants? A history of their conduct would be a black catalogue of dishonesty, oppression, and treachery. Respectable men resident on or near the estate, possessing both character and property, should always be selected for this important trust. But above all things, the curse of a tenantry is a *per-centage* agent: he racks, and drives, and oppresses, without consideration either of market or produce, in order that his receipts may be ample, and his own income large."

"Why, O'Brien, you appear to be better acquainted with all this sort of thing than I, who am a landed proprietor."

"By the by, Sir, without meaning you any disrespect, it is the landlords of Ireland who know least

about the great mass of its inhabitants; and I might also add, about its history, its literature, the manners of the people, their customs and their prejudices. The peasantry know this, and too often practise upon their ignorance. There is a landlord's *Vade mecum* sadly wanted in Ireland, Colonel."

"Ah! very good, O'Brien, very good! Well, I shall certainly inquire into this case, and if I find that Yellow Sam has been playing the oppressor, out he goes. I am now able to manage him, which I could not readily do before, for, by the by, he had mortgages on my property."

"I would take it, Colonel, as a personal favour, if you would investigate the transaction I have mentioned."

"Undoubtedly I shall, and that very soon. But about this outrage committed against the boy himself? We had better take his informations and punish the fellow."

"Certainly; I think that is the best way. His conduct to the poor youth has been merciless and detestable. We must put him out of this part of the country."

"Call the lad in. In this case I shall draw up the informations myself, although Gregg usually does that."

Jemmy, assisted by the Curate, entered the room, and the humane Colonel desired him, as he appeared ill, to sit down.

"What is your name?" asked the Colonel.

"James M'Evoy," he replied. "I'm the son, Sir, of a man who was once a tenant of yours."

"Ay! and pray how did he cease to be a tenant of mine?"

"Why, Sir, your agent, Yallow Sam, put him out of our farm, when my poor mother was on her sick bed. He chated my father, Sir, out of some money —part of our rent it was, that he didn't give him a receipt for. When my father went to him afterwards for the receipt, Yallow Sam abused him, and called him a rogue, and that, Sir, was what no man ever called my father either before or since. My father, Sir, threatened to tell you about it, and you came to the country soon after; but Yallow Sam got very great wid my father at that time, and sent him to sell bullocks for him about fifty miles off, but when he come back again you had left the country. Thin, Sir, Yallow Sam said nothing till the next half-year's rent became due, whin he came down on my father for all —that is, what he hadn't got the receipt for, and the other gale, and without any warning in the world, put him out. My father offered to pay all, but he said he was a rogue, and that you had ordered him off the estate. In less than a week after this he put a man that married a bastard daughter of his own into our house and place. That's God's truth, Sir, and you'll find it so, if you inquire into it. It's a common trick of his to keep back receipts, and make the tenants pay double."*

"Sacred heaven, O'Brien, can this be possible?"

* This is fact. The individual here alluded to, frequently kept back receipts when receiving rents, under pretence of hurry, and afterwards compelled the tenants to pay the same gale twice!

"Your best way, Colonel, is to inquire into it."

"Was not your father able to educate you at home my boy?"

"No, Sir; we soon got into poverty after we left your farm; and another thing, Sir, there was no Latin school in our neighbourhood."

"For what purpose did you become a poor scholar?"

"Why, Sir, I hoped one day or other to be able to raise my father and mother out of the distress that Yallow Sam brought on us."

"By heaven, a noble aim, and a noble sentiment. And what has this d——d fellow of a schoolmaster done to you?"

"Why, Sir, yesterday when I went back to the school, he abused me, and said that he supposed most of my relations were hanged—spoke ill of my father, and said that my mother"—here the tears started to his eyes—he sobbed aloud.

"Go on, and be cool," said the Colonel; "what did he say of your mother?"

"He said, Sir, that she was never married to my father. I know I was wrong, Sir—but if it was the king on his throne that said it of my mother, I'd call him a liar. I called *him* a liar, and a coward, and a villain. Ay, Sir, and if I had been able, I would have tramped him under my feet."

The Colonel looked steadily at him, but the open clear eye which the boy turned upon him was full of truth and independence.

"And you will find," said the soldier, "that this spirited defence of your mother will be the most for-

tunate action of your life. Well; he struck you then, did he?"

"He knocked me down, Sir, with his fist—then kicked me in the back and sides. I think some of my ribs are broke."

"Ay!—no doubt, no doubt," said the Colonel. "And you were only after recovering from this fever which is so prevalent?"

"I wasn't a week out of it, Sir."

"Well, my boy, we shall punish him for you."

"Sir, would you hear me for a word or two, if it would be pleasing to you?"

"Speak on," said the Colonel.

"I would rather change his punishment to—I would—that is—if it would be agreeable to you—It's this Sir—I wouldn't throuble you now against the master, if you'd be pleased to rightify my father, and punish Yallow Sam. Oh, Sir, for God's sake, put my heart-broken father into his farm again! If you would, Sir, I could shed my blood, or lay down my life for you, or for any belonging to you. I'm but a poor boy, Sir, low and humble; but they say there's a greater Being than the greatest in this world, that listens to the just prayers of the poor and friendless. I was never happy, Sir, since we left it—neither was any of us; and when we'd sit cowld and hungry, about our hearth, we used to be talking of the pleasant days we spent in it, till the tears would be smothered in curses against him that put us out of it. Oh, Sir, if you could know all that a poor and honest family suffers, when they are thrown into distress by want of feeling in their landlords, or by the dishonesty of

agents, you would consider my father's case. I'm his favourite son, Sir, and good right have I to speak for him. If you could know the sorrow, the misery, the drooping down of the spirits, that lies upon the countenances and the hearts of such people, you wouldn't, as a man and a Christian, think it below you to spread happiness and contentment among them again. In the morning they rise to a day of hardship, no matter how bright and cheerful it may be to others —nor is there any hope of a brighter day for *them ;* and at night they go to their hard beds to strive to sleep away their hunger in spite of cowld and want. If you could see how the father of a family, after striving to bear up, sinks down at last; if you could see the look he gives at the childre that he would lay down his heart's blood for, when they sit naked and hungry about him; and the mother, too, with her kind word and sorrowful smile, proud of them in all their destitution, but her heart breaking silently all the time, her face wasting away, her eye dim, and her strength gone !—Sir, make one such family happy —for all this has been in my father's house! Give us back our light spirits, our pleasant days, and our cheerful hearts again! We lost them through the villany of your agent. Give them back to us, for you *can* do it; but you can *never* pay us for what we suffered. Give us, Sir, our farm, our green fields, our house, and every spot and nook that we had before. We love the place, Sir, for its own sake ;—it is the place of our fathers, and our hearts are in it. I often think I see the smooth river that runs through it, and the meadows that I played in when I was

a child;—the glen behind our house, the mountains that rose before us when we left the door, the thorn-bush at the garden, the hazels in the glen, the little bleach-green beside the river—Oh, Sir, don't blame me for crying, for they are all before my eyes, in my ears, and in my heart! Many a summer evening have I gone to the march-ditch of the farm that my father's now in, and looked at the place I loved, till the tears blinded me, and I asked it as a favour of God to restore us to it! Sir, we are in great poverty at home; before God we are; and my father's heart is breaking!"

The Colonel drew his breath deeply, rubbed his hands, and as he looked at the fine countenance of the boy—expressing, as it did, enthusiasm and sorrow—his eye lightened with a gleam of indignation. It could not be against the poor scholar; no gentle reader, but against his own agent.

"O'Brien," said he, "what do you think? And this noble boy is the son of a man who belongs to a class of which I am ignorant! By heaven, we landlords are, I fear, a guilty race."

"Not all, Sir," replied the Curate. "There are noble exceptions among them; their faults are more the faults of omission than commission."

"Well, well, no matter. Come I will draw up the informations against this man; afterwards I have something to say to you, my boy," he added addressing Jemmy, "that will not, I trust, be unpleasant."

He then drew up the informations as strongly as he could word them, after which Jemmy deposed to

their truth and accuracy, and the Colonel rubbing his hands again, said—

"I will have the fellow secured. When you go into town, Mr. O'Brien, I'll thank you to call on Meares, and hand him these. He will lodge the miscreant in limbo this very night."

Jemmy then thanked him, and was about to withdraw, when the Colonel desired him to remain a little longer.

"Now," said he, "your father has been treated inhumanly, I believe; but no matter. That is not the question. Your sentiments, and conduct, and your affection for your parents are noble, my boy. At present, I say, the question is not whether the history of your father's wrongs be true or false; you at least *believe* it to be true. From this forward—but by the by, I forgot; how could your becoming a poor scholar relieve your parents?"

"I intended to become a priest, Sir, and then to help them."

"Ay! so I thought; and provided your father were restored to his farm, would you be still disposed to become a priest?"

"I would, Sir; next to helping my father, that is what I wish to be."

"O'Brien, what would it cost to prepare him respectably for the priesthood? I mean, to defray his expenses until he completes his preparatory education, in the first place, and afterwards during his residence in Maynooth?"

"I think two hundred pounds, Sir, would do it easily and respectably."

" I do not think it would. However, do you send him—but first let me ask what progress he has already made?"

" He has read—in fact he *is* nearly prepared to enter Maynooth. His progress has been very rapid."

" Put him to some respectable boarding-school for a year; then let him enter Maynooth, and I will bear the expense. But remember I do not adopt this course in consequence of his father's history. Not I, by Jupiter; I do it on his own account. He is a noble boy, and full of fine qualities, if they be not nipped by neglect and poverty. I loved my father myself, and fought a duel on his account; and I honour the son who has spirit to defend his absent parent."

" This is a most surprising turn in the boy's fortunes, Colonel."

" He deserves it. A soldier, Mr. O'Brien, is not without his enthusiasm, nor can he help admiring it in others, when nobly and virtuously directed. To see a boy in the midst of poverty, encountering the hardships and difficulties of life, with the hope of raising up his parents from distress to independence, has a touch of sublimity in it."

" Ireland, Colonel abounds with instances of similar virtue, brought out, probably, into fuller life and vigour by the sad changes and depressions which are weighing down the people. In her glens, on her bleak mountain sides, and in her remotest plains, such examples of pure affection, uncommon energy, and humble heroism, are to be seen; but, unfortunately, few persons of rank or observation mingle

with the Irish people, and their many admirable qualities pass away without being recorded in the literature of their country. They are certainly a strange people, Colonel, almost an anomaly in the history of the human race. They are the only people who can rush out from the very virtues of private life to the perpetration of crimes at which we shudder. There is, to be sure, an outcry about their oppression; but that is wrong. Their indigence and ignorance are rather the result of neglect;—of neglect, Sir, from the government of the country—from the earl to the squireen. They have been taught little that is suitable to their stations, and duties in life, either as tenants who cultivate our lands, or as members of moral or Christian society."

"Well, well: I believe what you say is too true. But touching the records of virtue in humble life, pray who would record it when nothing goes down now-a-days but what is either monstrous or fashionable."

"Very true, Colonel; yet in my humble opinion, a virtuous Irish peasant is far from being so low a character as a profligate man of rank."

"Well, well, well! Come, O'Brien, we will drop the subject. In the mean time, touching this boy, as I said, he must be looked to, for he has that in him which ought not to be neglected. We shall now see that this d——d pedagogue be punished for his cruelty."

The worthy Colonel in a short time dismissed poor Jemmy with an exulting heart; but not until he had placed a sufficient sum in the Curate's hands for enabling him to make a respectable appearance. Me-

dical advice was also procured for him, by which he sooner overcame the effects of his master's brutality.

On their way home Jemmy related to his friend the conversation which he had had with his Bishop in the shed, and the kind interest which that gentleman had taken in his situation and prospects. Mr. O'Brien told him that the Bishop was an excellent man, possessing much discrimination and benevolence; "and so," said he, "is the Protestant clergyman who accompanied him. They have both gone among the people during this heavy visitation of disease and famine, administering advice and assistance; restraining them from those excesses which they sometimes commit, when, driven by hunger, they attack provision-carts, bakers' shops, or the houses of farmers who are known to possess a stock of meal or potatoes. God knows, it is an excusable kind of robbery; yet it is right to restrain them."

"It is a pleasant thing, Sir, to see clergymen of every religion working together to make the people happy."

"It is certainly so," replied the Curate; "and I am bound to say, in justice to the Protestant clergy, that there is no class of men in Ireland, James, who do *so much* good without distinction of creed or party. They are generally kind and charitable to the poor; so are their wives and daughters. I have often known them to cheer the sick-bed—to assist the widow and the orphan—to advise and admonish the profligate, and, in some instances, even to reclaim them. But now about your own prospects; I think you should go and see your family as soon as your health permits you."

"I would give my right hand," replied Jemmy, "just to see them, if it was only for five minutes: but I cannot go. I vowed that I would never enter my native parish until I should become a Catholic clergyman. I vowed that, Sir, to God—and with his assistance I will keep my vow."

"Well," said the curate, "you are right. And now let me give you a little advice. In the first place, learn to speak as correctly as you can; lay aside the vulgarisms of conversation peculiar to the common people; and speak precisely as you would write. By the by, you acquitted yourself to admiration with the Colonel. A little stumbling there was in the beginning; but you got over it. You see, James, the force of truth and simplicity. I could scarcely restrain my tears while you spoke."

"If I had not been in earnest, Sir, I could never have spoken as I did."

"You never could. Truth, James, is the foundation of all eloquence; he who knowingly speaks what is not true, may dazzle and perplex; but he will never touch with that power and pathos which spring from truth. Fiction is successful only by borrowing her habiliments. Now, James, for a little more advice. Don't let the idea of having been a poor scholar deprive you of self-respect; neither let your unexpected turn of fortune cause you to forget what you have suffered. Hold a middle course; be firm and independent; without servility on the one hand, or vanity on the other. You have also too much good sense, and, I hope, too much religion, to ascribe what this day has brought forth in your behalf, to any other

cause than God. It has pleased him to raise you from misery to ease and comfort; to him, therefore, be it referred, and to him be your thanks and prayers directed. You owe him much, for you now can perceive the value of what he has done for you! May his name be blessed!"

Jemmy was deeply affected by the kindness of his friend, for such, in friendship's truest sense, was he to him. He expressed the obligations which he owed him, and promised to follow the excellent advice he had just received.

The schoolmaster's conduct to the poor scholar had, before the close of the day on which it occurred, been known through the parish. Thady O'Rorke, who had but just recovered from the epidemic, felt so bitterly exasperated at the outrage, that he brought his father to the parish priest, to whom he gave a detailed account of all that our hero and the poorer children of the school had suffered. In addition to this, he went among the more substantial farmers of the neighbourhood, whose co-operation he succeeded in obtaining, for the laudable purpose of driving the tyrant out of the parish.

Jemmy, who still lived at the "House of Entertainment," on hearing what they intended to do, begged Mr. O'Brien to allow him, provided the master should be removed from the school, to decline prosecuting him.

"He has been cruel to me, no doubt," he added; "still I cannot forget that his cruelty has been the means of changing my condition in life so much for the better. If he is put out of the parish it will be

punishment enough; and, to say the truth, Sir, I can *now* forgive every body. Maybe, had I been still *neglected* I might punish him; but, in the mean time, to show him and the world that I didn't deserve his severity, I forgive him."

Mr. O'Brien was not disposed to check a sentiment that did the boy's heart so much honour; he waited on the Colonel the next morning, acquainted him with Jemmy's wishes, and the indictment was quashed immediately after the schoolmaster's removal from his situation.

Our hero's personal appearance was by this time incredibly changed for the better. His countenance, naturally expressive of feeling, firmness, and intellect, now appeared to additional advantage; so did his whole person, when dressed in a decent suit of black. No man acquainted with life can be ignorant of the improvement which genteel apparel produces in the carriage, tone of thought, and principles of an individual. It gives a man confidence, self-respect, and a sense of equality with his companions; it inspires him with energy, independence, delicacy of sentiment, courtesy of manner, and elevation of language. The face becomes manly, bold, and free; the brow open, and the eye clear; there is no slinking through narrow lanes and back streets: but, on the contrary, the smoothly dressed man steps out with a determination not to spare the earth, or to walk as if he trod on eggs or razors. No; he brushes onward; is the first to accost his friends; gives a careless bow to this, a bluff nod to that, and a patronising "how d'ye do" to a third, who is worse dressed than himself. Trust me,

kind reader, that good clothes are calculated to advance a man in life nearly as well as good principles, especially in a world like this, where external appearance is taken as the exponent of what is beneath it.

Jemmy, by the advice of his friend, now waited upon the Bishop, who was much surprised at the uncommon turn of fortune which had taken place in his favour. He also expressed his willingness to help him forward, as far as lay in his power, towards the attainment of his wishes. In order to place the boy directly under suitable patronage, Mr. O'Brien suggested that the choice of the school should be left to the Bishop. This, perhaps, flattered him a little, for who is without his weaknesses? A school near the metropolis was accordingly fixed upon, to which Jemmy, now furnished with a handsome outfit, was accordingly sent. There we will leave him, reading with eagerness and assiduity, whilst we return to look after Colonel B. and his agent.

One morning after James's departure, the Colonel's servant waited upon Mr. O'Brien with a note from his master, intimating a wish to see him. He lost no time in waiting upon that gentleman, who was then preparing to visit the estate which he had so long neglected.

"I am going," said he, "to see how my agent, Yellow Sam, as they call him, and my tenants agree. It is my determination, Mr. O'Brien, to investigate the circumstances attending the removal of our *protégée's* father. I shall, moreover, look closely into the state and feelings of my tenants in general. It is probable I shall visit many of them, and

certain that I will inquire into the character of this man."

"It is better late than never, Colonel; but still, though I am a friend to the people, yet I would recommend you to be guided by great caution, and the evidence of respectable and disinterested men only. You must not certainly entertain all the complaints you may hear, without clear proof, for I regret to say, that too many of the idle and political portion of the peasantry are apt to throw the blame of their own folly and ignorance—yes, and of their crimes, also—upon those who in no way have occasioned either their poverty or their wickedness. They are frequently apt to consider themselves oppressed, if concessions are not made, to which they, as idle and indolent men, who neglect their own business, have no fair claim. Bear this in mind, Colonel—be cool, use discrimination, take your proofs from others besides the parties concerned, or their friends, and, depend upon it, you will arrive at the truth."

"O'Brien, you would make an excellent agent."

"I have studied the people, Sir, and know them. I have breathed the atmosphere of their prejudices, habits, manners, customs, and superstitions. I have felt them all myself, as they feel them; but I trust I have got above their influence where it is evil, for there are many fine touches of character among them, which I should not willingly part with. No, Sir, I should make a bad agent, having no capacity for transacting business. I could direct and overlook, but nothing more."

"Well, then, I shall set out to-morrow; and in

the mean time, permit me to say that I am deeply sensible of your kindness in pointing out my duty as an Irish landlord, conscious that I have too long neglected it."

"Kindness, Colonel, is the way to the Irish heart. There is but one man in Ireland who can make an Irishman ungrateful, and that is his priest. I regret that in times of political excitement, and especially during electioneering struggles, the interference of the clergy produces disastrous effects upon the moral feelings of the people. When a tenant meets the landlord whom he has deserted in the critical moment of the contest—the landlord to whom he has solemnly promised his support, and who, perhaps, as a member of the legislature, has advocated his claims and his rights, and who, probably, has been kind and indulgent to him—I say, when he meets him afterwards, his shufflings, excuses, and evasions are grievous. He is driven to falsehood and dissimulation in explaining his conduct; he expresses his repentance, curses himself for his ingratitude, promises well for the future, but seldom or never can be prevailed upon to state candidly that he acted in obedience to the priest. In some instances, however, he admits this, and inveighs bitterly against his interference—but this is only whilst in the presence of his landlord. I think, Colonel, that no clergyman, set apart as he is for the concerns of a better world, should become a firebrand in the secular pursuits and turmoils of this."

"I wish, Mr. O'Brien, that every clergyman of your church resembled you, and acted up to your sentiments: our common country would be the better for it."

"I endeavour to act, Sir, as a man who has purely spiritual duties to perform. It is not for us to be agitated and inflamed by the political passions and animosities of the world. Our lot is differently cast, and we ought to abide by it. The priest and politician can no more agree than good and evil. I speak with respect to *all* churches."

"And so do I."

"What stay do you intend to make, Colonel?"

"I think about a month. I shall visit some of my old friends there, from whom I expect a history of the state and feelings of the country."

"You will hear both sides of the question before you act?"

"Certainly. I have written to my agent to say that I shall look very closely into my own affairs on *this* occasion. I thought it fair to give him notice."

"Well, Sir, I wish you all success."

"Farewell, Mr. O'Brien; I shall see you immediately after my return."

The Colonel performed his journey by slow stages, until he reached "the hall of his fathers,"—for it was such, although he had not for years resided in it. It presented the wreck of a fine old mansion, situated within a crescent of stately beeches, whose moss-covered and ragged trunks gave symptoms of decay and neglect. The lawn had been once beautiful, and the demesne a noble one; but that which blights the industry of the tenant—the curse of absenteeism—had also left the marks of ruin stamped upon every object around him. The lawn was little better than a common; the pond was thick with weeds and

sluggish water-plants, that almost covered its surface; and a light elegant bridge, that spanned a river which ran before the house, was also moss-grown and dilapidated. The hedges were mixed up with briers, the gates broken, or altogether removed, the fields were rank with the ruinous luxuriance of weeds, and the grass-grown avenues spoke of solitude and desertion. The still appearance, too, of the house itself, and the absence of smoke from its time-tinged chimneys—all told a tale which constitutes, one, perhaps the *greatest*, portion of Ireland's misery! Even then he did not approach it with the intention of residing there during his sojourn in the country. It was not habitable, nor had it been so for years. The road by which he travelled lay near it, and he could not pass without looking upon the place where a long line of gallant ancestors had succeeded each other, lived their span, and disappeared in their turn.

He contemplated it for some time in a kind of reverie. There it stood, sombre and silent;—its grey walls mouldering away—its windows dark and broken;—like a man forsaken by the world, compelled to bear the storms of life without the hand of a friend to support him, though age and decay render him less capable of enduring them. For a moment fancy repeopled it;—again the stir of life, pastime, mirth, and hospitality echoed within its walls; the train of his long-departed relatives returned; the din of rude and boisterous enjoyment peculiar to the times; the cheerful tumult of the hall at dinner; the family feuds and festivities; the vanities and the passions of those who now slept in dust;—all—all came before him

once more, and played their part in the vision of the moment!

As he walked on, the flitting wing of a bat struck him lightly in its flight; he awoke from the remembrances which crowded on him, and, resuming his journey, soon arrived at the inn of the nearest town, where he stopped that night. The next morning he saw his agent for a short time, but declined entering upon business. For a few days more he visited most of the neighbouring gentry, from whom he received sufficient information to satisfy him, that neither himself nor his agent was popular among his tenantry. Many flying reports of the agent's dishonesty and tyranny were mentioned to him, and in every instance he took down the names of the parties, in order to ascertain the truth. M'Evoy's case had occurred more than ten years before, but he found that the remembrance of the poor man's injury was strongly and bitterly retained in the recollections of the people — a circumstance which extorted from the blunt, but somewhat sentimental soldier, a just observation:—"I think," said he, "that there are no people in the world who remember an injury or a kindness so long as the Irish."

When the tenants were apprized of his presence among them, they experienced no particular feeling upon the subject. During all his former visits to his estate, he appeared merely the creature and puppet of his agent, who never acted the bully, nor tricked himself out in his brief authority more imperiously than he did before him. The knowledge of this damped them, and rendered any expectations of

redress or justice from the landlord a matter not to be thought of.

" If he wasn't so great a man," they observed, " who thinks it below him to speak to his tenants, or hear their complaints, there 'ud be some hope. But that rip of hell, Yallow Sam, can wind him round his finger like a thread, an' does, too. There's no use in thinkin' to petition him, or to lodge a complaint against Stony Heart, for the first thing he'd do 'ud be to put it into the yallow-boy's hands, an' thin, God be marciful to thim that 'ud complain. No, no; the best way is to wait till Sam's masther* takes him; an' who knows but that 'ud be sooner nor we think."

" They say," another would reply, " that the Colonel is a good gintleman for all that, an' that if he could *once* know the truth, he'd pitch the ' yallow boy' to the ' ould boy.' "

No sooner was it known by his tenantry that the head landlord was disposed to redress their grievances, and hear their complaints, than the smothered attachment, which long neglect had nearly extinguished, now burst forth with uncommon power.

" Augh! by this an' by that, the thrue blood's in him still. The rale gintleman to dale wid, for ever! We knew he only wanted to come at the thruth, an' thin he'd back us agin the villain that harrished us! To the divil wid skamin' upstarts, that hasn't the ould blood in thim! What are they but sconces an' chates, every one o' thim, barrin' an odd one, for a wondher!"

* The devil;—a familiar name for him, when mentioned in connexion with a villain.

The Colonel's estate now presented a scene of gladness and bustle. Every person who felt in the slightest degree aggrieved, got his petition drawn up; and, but that we fear our sketch is already too long, we would gratify the reader's curiosity by submitting a few of them. It is sufficient to say, that they came to him in every shape—in all the variety of diction that the poor English language admits of—in the schoolmaster's best copy-hand, and choicest sesquipedalianism of pedantry—in the severer, but more Scriptural terms of the parish clerk—in the engrossing hand and legal phrase of the attorney's—in the military form, evidently redolent of the shrewd old pensioner—and in the classical style of the young priest;—for each and all of the foregoing were enlisted in the cause of those who had petitions to send in "to the Colonel himself, God bless him!"

Early in the morning of the day on which the Colonel had resolved to compare the complaints of his tenantry with the character which his agent gave him of the complainants, he sent for the former, and the following dialogue took place between them.

"Good morning, Mr. Carson! Excuse me for requesting your presence to day earlier than usual. I have taken it into my head to know something of my own tenantry, and as they have pestered me with petitions, and letters, and complaints, I am anxious to have your opinion, as you know them better than I do."

"Before we enter on business, Colonel, allow me to inquire if you feel relieved of that bilious attack you complained of the day before yesterday? I'm of

a bilious habit myself, and know something about the management of digestion!"

"A good digestion is an excellent thing, Carson; as for me, I drank too much claret with my friend B——y; and there's the secret. I don't like cold wines, they never agree with me."

"Nor do I; they are not constitutional. Your father was celebrated for his wines, Colonel: I remember an anecdote told me by Captain Ferguson ——by the by, do you know where Ferguson could be found now, Sir?"

"Not I. What wines do *you* drink, Carson?"

"A couple of glasses of sherry, Sir, at dinner; and about ten o'clock, a glass of brandy and water."

"Carson, you are sober and *prudent*. Well, about these cursed petitions; you must help me to dispose of them. Why, a man would think by the tenour of them, that these tenants of mine are ground to dust by a tyrant."

"Ah! Colonel, you know little about these fellows. They would make black white. Go and take a ride, Sir, return about four o'clock, and I will have every thing as it ought to be."

"I wish to heaven, Carson, I had your talents for business. Do you think my tenants attached to me?"

"Attached! Sir, they are ready to cut your throat or mine, on the first convenient opportunity. You could not conceive their knavishness and dishonesty, except you happened to be an agent for a few years."

"So I have been told, and I am resolved to remove every dishonest tenant from my estate. Is there not a man, for instance, called Brady? He has sent

me a long-winded petition here. What do you think of him?"

"Show me the petition, Colonel?"

"I cannot lay my hand on it just now; but you shall see it. In the mean time what's your opinion of the fellow?"

"Brady! Why I know the man particularly well. He is one of my favourites. What the deuce could the fellow petition about, though? I promised the other day to renew his lease for him."

"Oh, then, if he be a favourite of yours, his petition may go to the devil, I suppose? Is the man honest?"

"Remarkably so; and has paid his rents very punctually. He is one of our safest tenants."

"Do you know a man called Cullen?"

"The most litigious scoundrel on the estate."

"Indeed! Oh, then, we must look into the merits of *his* petition, as he is *not* honest. Had he been honest like Brady, Carson, I should have dismissed it."

"Cullen, Sir, is a dangerous fellow. Do you know, that rascal has charged me with keeping back his receipts, and with making him pay double rent!—ha, ha, ha! Upon my honour, it's fact."

"The scoundrel! We shall sift him to some purpose, however."

"If you take my advice, Sir, you will send him about his business; for if it be once known that you listen to malicious petitions, my authority over such villains as Cullen is lost."

"Well, I set him aside for the present. Here's a

long list of others, all of whom have been oppressed, forsooth. Is there a man called M'Evoy on my estate?—Dominick M'Evoy, I think."

"M'Evoy! Why that rascal, Sir, has not been your tenant for ten years! *His* petition, Colonel, is a key to the nature of their grievances in general."

"I believe you, Carson — most implicitly do I *believe* that. Well, about that rascal?"

"Why, it is so long since, that upon my honour, I cannot exactly remember the circumstances of his misconduct. He ran away."

"Who is in his farm now, Carson?"

"A very decent man, Sir. One Jackson, an exceedingly worthy, honest, industrious fellow. I take some credit to myself for bringing Jackson on your estate."

"Is Jackson married? Has he a family?"

"Married! Let me see! Why—yes—I *believe* he is. Oh, by the by, now I think of it, he *is* married, and to a very respectable woman, too. Certainly, I remember—she usually accompanies him when he pays his rents."

"Then your system must be a good one, Carson; you weed out the idle and profligate, to replace them by the honest and industrious?"

"Precisely so, Sir; that is my system."

"Yet there are agents who invert your system in some cases; who drive out the honest and industrious, and encourage the idle and profligate; who connive at them, Carson, and fill the estates they manage with their own dependents, or relatives, as

the case may be. You have been always opposed to this, and I'm glad to hear it."

"No man, Colonel B——, filling the situation which I have the honour to hold under you, could study your interests with greater zeal and assiduity. God knows, I have had so many quarrels, and feuds, and wranglings, with these fellows, in order to squeeze money out of them to meet your difficulties, that, upon my honour, I think if it required five dozen oaths to hang me, they could be procured upon your estate. An agent, Colonel, who is faithful to the landlord, is seldom popular with the tenants."

"I can't exactly see that, Carson; and I have known an unpopular landlord rendered highly popular by the judicious management of an enlightened and honest agent, who took no bribes, Carson, and who neither extorted from nor ground the tenantry under him—something like a counterpart of yourself. But you may be right in general."

"Is there any thing particular, Colonel, in which I can assist you now?"

"Not now. I was anxious to hear the character of those fellows from you who know them. Come down about eleven or twelve o'clock; these petitioners will be assembled, and you may be able to assist me."

"Colonel, remember I forewarn you, that you are plunging into a mesh of difficulties, which you will never be able to disentangle. Leave the fellows to me, Sir; I know how to deal with them. Besides, upon my honour, you are not equal to it, in point of

health. You look ill. Pray allow me to take home their papers, and I shall have all clear and satisfactory before two o'clock. They know my method, Sir."

"They do, Carson, they *do;* but I am anxious they should also know *mine.* Besides, it will amuse me, for I want excitement. Good day, for the present; you will be down about twelve, or one at the farthest."

"Certainly, Sir. Good morning, Colonel."

The agent was too shrewd a man not to perceive that there were touches of cutting irony in some of the Colonel's expressions, which he did not like. There was a dryness, too, in the tone of his voice and words, blended with a copiousness of good humour, which taken altogether, caused him to feel uncomfortable. He could have wished the Colonel at the devil; yet had the said Colonel never been more familiar in his life, nor, with one or two exceptions, readier to agree with almost every observation made to him.

"Well," thought he, "*he* may act as he pleases; *I* have feathered my nest, at all events, and disregard him."

Colonel B——, in fact, ascertained with extreme regret, that something was necessary to be done, to secure the good-will of his tenants; that the conduct of his agent had been marked by rapacity and bribery almost incredible. He had exacted from the tenantry in general the performance of duty-labour to such an extent, that his immense agricultural farms were managed with little expense to himself. If a poor man's corn were drop ripe, or his hay in a precarious state, or his turf undrawn, he must suffer his oats, hay, and turf, to be lost, in order to secure the crops

of the agent. If he had spirit to refuse, he must expect to become a martyr to his resentment. In renewing leases his extortions were exorbitant; ten, thirty, forty, and fifty guineas he claimed as a fee for his favour, according to the ability of the party; yet this was quite distinct from the renewal fine, and went into his own pocket. When such "glove money" was not to be had, he would accept of a cow or horse, to which he usually made a point to take a fancy; or he wanted to purchase a firkin of butter at that particular time, and the poor people usually made every sacrifice to avoid his vengeance. It is due to Colonel B—— to say, that he acted in the investigation of his agent's conduct with the strictest honour and impartiality. He scrutinized every statement thoroughly, pleaded for him as temperately as he could; found, or pretended to find, extenuating motives for his most indefensible proceedings; but all would not do. The cases were so clear and evident against him, even in the opinion of the neighbouring gentry, who had been for years looking upon the system of selfish misrule which he practised, that at length the generous Colonel's blood boiled with indignation in his veins at the contemplation of his villany. He accused himself bitterly for neglecting his duties as a landlord, and felt both remorse and shame for having wasted his time, health, and money, in the fashionable dissipation of London and Paris; whilst a cunning, unprincipled upstart played the vampire with his tenants, and turned his estate into a scene of oppression and poverty. Nor was this all; he had been endeavouring to bring the property more and

more into his own clutches, a point which he would ultimately have gained, had not the Colonel's late succession to so large a fortune enabled him to meet his claims.

At one o'clock the tenants were all assembled about the inn door, where the Colonel had resolved to hold his little court. The agent himself soon arrived, as did several other gentlemen, the Colonel's friends, who knew the people, and could speak to their character.

The first man called was Dominick M'Evoy. No sooner was his name uttered, than a mild, poor-looking man, rather advanced in years, came forward.

"I beg your pardon, Colonel," said Carson, "here is some mistake; this man is not one of your tenants. You may remember I told you so this morning."

"I remember it," replied the Colonel; "this is 'the rascal' you spoke of—is he not? M'Evoy," the Colonel proceeded, "you will reply to my questions with strict truth. You will state nothing but what has occurred between you and my agent; you must not even turn a circumstance in your own favour, nor against Mr. Carson, by either adding to, or taking away from it, more or less than the truth. I say this to you, and to all present; for, upon my honour, I shall dismiss the first case in which I discover a falsehood."

"Wid the help o' the Almighty, Sir, I'll state nothing but the bare thruth."

"How long are you off my estate?"

"Ten years, your honour, or a little more."

"How came you to run away out of your farm?"

"Run away, your honour! God, he knows, I did'nt run away, Sir. The whole counthry knows that."

"Yes, run away! Mr. Carson, here, stated to me this morning, that you ran away. He is a gentleman of integrity, and would not state a falsehood."

"I beg your pardon, Colonel, not positively. I told you I did not exactly remember the circumstances; I said I thought so; but I may be wrong, for, indeed, my memory of facts is not good. M'Evoy, however, is a very *honest man*, and I have no doubt will state every thing as it happened, fairly and without malice."

"An honest '*rascal*,' I suppose you mean, Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, bitterly. "Proceed, M'Evoy."

M'Evoy stated the circumstances precisely as the reader is already acquainted with them; after which the Colonel turned round to his agent, and inquired what he had to say in reply.

"You cannot expect, Colonel B——," he replied, "that with such a multiplicity of business on my hands, I could remember, after a lapse of ten years, the precise state of this particular case. Perhaps I may have some papers, a memorandum or so, at home, that may throw light upon it. At present I can only say, that the man failed in his rents, I ejected him, and put a better tenant in his place. I cannot see a crime in that."

"Plase your honour," replied M'Evoy, "I can prove by them that's standin' to the fore this minute, as

well as by this written Affidavit, Sir, that I offered him the full rint, havin', at the same time, as God is my judge, ped part of it afore."

"That is certainly false—an untrue and malicious statement," said Carson. "I now remember that the cause of my resentment—yes, of my just resentment against you, was your reporting that I received your rent and withheld your receipt."

"Then," observed the Colonel, "there has been *more than one* charge of that nature brought against you? You mentioned *another* to me this morning, if I mistake not."

"I have made my oath, your honour, of the thruth of it; an' here is a dacent man, Sir, a Protestant, that lent me the money, an' was present when I offered it to him. Mr. Smith, come forrid, Sir, an' spake up for the poor man, as you're always willin' to do."

"I object to *his* evidence," said Carson: "he is my open enemy."

"I am your enemy, Mr. Carson, or rather the enemy of your corruption and want of honesty," said Smith: "but, as you say, an *open* one. I scorn to say behind your back what I wouldn't say to your face. Right well you know I was present when he tendered you his rent. I lent him part of it. But why did you and your bailiffs turn him out, when his wife was on her sick bed? Allowing that he could not pay his rent, was that any reason you should do so barbarous an act as to drag a woman from her sick bed, and she at the point of death? But we know your reasons for it."

" Gentlemen," said the Colonel, " pray what character do M'Evoy and Smith here bear in the country ?"

" We have known them both for years to be honest, conscientious men," said those whom he addressed : " such is their character, and in our opinion they well deserve it."

" God bless you, gintlemen !" said M'Evoy — " God bless your honours, for your kind words ! I'm sure, for my own part, I hope I'll always desarve your good opinion, although but a poor man *now*, God help me !"

" Pray, who occupies the farm at present, Mr. Carson ?"

" The man I mentioned to you this morning, Sir. His name is Jackson."

" And pray, Mr. Carson; who is his wife ?"

" Oh, by the by, Colonel, that's a little too close ! I see the gentlemen smile ; but they know I must beg to decline answering that question—not that it matters much. We have all sown our wild oats in our time—myself as well as another—ha, ha, ha !"

" The fact, under other circumstances," observed the Colonel, " could never draw an inquiry from me ; but as it is connected with, or probably has occasioned, a gross, unfeeling, and an unjust act of oppression towards an honest man, I therefore alluded to it, as exhibiting the motives from which you acted. She is your illegitimate daughter, Sir !"

" She's one o' the baker's dozen o' them, plase your honour," observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern

accent—" for feth, Sir, for my part, A thenk he hes one on every hill head. A'll count, your honour, on my fingers a roun' haif-dozen, aall on your estate, Sir, featherin' their nests as fast as they can."

" Is this Jackson a good tenant, Mr. Carson ?"

" I gave you his character this morning, Colonel B."

" Hout, Colonel !" said the Presbyterian, " deil a penny rent the man pays, at aall at aall. A'll swear A hev it from Jackson's own lips. He made him a Bailey, Sir ; he suts rent free. Ask the man, Sir, for his receipts, an' A'll warrant the truth will come out."

" I have secured Jackson's attendance," said the Colonel : " let him be called in."

The man in a few minutes entered.

' Jackson," said the Colonel, " how long is it since you paid Mr. Carson here any rent ?"

Jackson looked at Carson for his cue ; but the Colonel rose up indignantly : " Fellow !" he proceeded, " if you tamper with me a single moment, you shall find Mr. Carson badly able to protect you. If you speak falsehood, be it at your peril."

" By Jing, Sir," said Jackson, " A'll say nothin' aginst my father-in-laa, an' A don't care who teks it well or ull. A was jist tekin' a *gun** with a fren' or two—an' d—— me, A say, A'll stick to my father-in-laa, for he hes stuck to me."

" You appear to be a hardened drunken wretch," observed the Colonel. " Will you be civil enough to show your last receipt for rent ?"

" Wull A show it? A dono whether A wull or not, nor A dono whether A hev it or not ; but ef aall

* A half-tumbler of punch.

the receipts in Europe wur burnt, d—— my blood, but A'll stick to my father-in-laa."

"Your father-in-law may be proud of you," said the Colonel.

"By h——, A'll back you en that," said the fellow nodding his head, and looking round him confidently. "By h——, A say that, too!"

"And I am sorry to be compelled to add," continued the Colonel, "that you may be equally proud of your father-in-law."

"A say, right agane! D—— me, bit A'll back that too!" and he nodded confidently, and looked around the room once more. "A wull; d—— my blood, bit no man can say agane it. A'm married to his daughther; an', by the sun that shines, A'll still stan' up for my father-in-laa."

"Mr. Carson," said the Colonel, "can you disprove these facts? Can you show that you did not expel M'Evoy from his farm, and put the husband of your illegitimate daughter into it? That you did not receive his rent, decline giving him a receipt, and afterwards compel him to pay twice, because he could not produce the receipt which you withheld?"

"Gentlemen," said Carson, not directly replying to the Colonel, "there is a base conspiracy got up against me; and I can perceive, moreover, that there is evidently some unaccountable intention on the part of Colonel B. to insult my feelings, and injure my character. When paltry circumstances that have occurred above ten years ago, are raked up in my teeth, I have little to say, but that it proves how very badly off the Colonel must have been for an imputation

against my conduct and discretion as his agent, since he finds himself compelled to hunt so far back for a charge."

"That is by no means the heaviest charge I have to bring against you," replied the Colonel. "There is no lack of them; nor shall you be able to complain that they are not *recent*, as well as of longer standing. Your conduct in the case of poor honest M'Evoy here, is black and iniquitous. He must be restored to his farm, but by other hands than yours, and that ruffian instantly expelled from it. From this moment, Sir, you cease to be my agent. You have betrayed the confidence I reposed in you; you have misled me as to the character of my tenants; you have been a deceitful, cringing, cunning, selfish, and rapacious tyrant. My people you have ground to dust; my property you have lessened in value nearly one-half, and for your motives in doing this, I refer you to certain transactions and legal documents which passed between us. There is nothing cruel or mercenary which you did not practise, in order to enrich yourself. The whole tenour of your conduct is before me. Your profligacy is not only discovered, but already proved; and you played those villanous pranks, I suppose, because I have been mostly an Absentee. Do not think, however, that you shall enjoy the fruits of your extortion? I will place the circumstances, and the proofs of the respective charges against you, in the hands of my solicitor, and, by the sacred heaven above me! you shall disgorge the fruits of your rapacity. My good people, I shall remain among you for another fortnight, during

which time I intend to go through my estate, and set every thing to rights as well as I can, until I may appoint a humane and feeling *gentleman* as my agent —such a one as will have, at least, a *character* to lose. I also take this opportunity of informing you, that in future I shall visit you often, will redress your grievances, should you have any to complain of, and will give such assistance to the honest and industrious among you—but to *them only*—as I trust may make us better pleased with each other than we have been.——Do not you go, M 'Evoy, until I speak to you."

During these observations Carson sat with a smile, or rather a sneer upon his lips. It was the sneer of a purse-proud villain, confident that his wealth, no matter how ill-gotten, was still wealth, and worth its value.

" Colonel," said he, " I have heard all you said, but you see me ' so strong in honesty,' that I am not moved. In the course of a few weeks I shall have purchased an estate of my own, *which I will manage differently*, for my fortune is made, Sir. I intend also to give up my other agencies: I am rather old, and must retire to enjoy a little of the *otium cum dignitate.* I wish you all good morning !"

The Colonel turned away in abhorrence, but disdained any reply.

" A say, Sam," said the Presbyterian, " bring your son-in-laa wuth you."

" An' A say that too," exclaimed the drunken ruffian—" A say that; A do. A'm married to his daughther; an' A say stull, that d——n my blood,

bit A'll stick to my father-in-laa! That's the point!" —and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger:—"A'll stick to my father-in-laa! A'll do that; feth, A wull!"*

It is scarcely necessary to inform the reader, that the Colonel's address to Carson soon got among the assembled tenantry, and a vehement volley of groans and hisses followed the discarded agent up the street.

"Ha! bad luck to you for an ould villain! You were made to hear on the deaf side o' your 'head at last! You may take the black wool out o' your ears now, you rip! The cries an' curses o' the widows an' orphans that you made and oppressed, has ris up agin you at the long run! Ha! you beggarly nager! maybe you'll make us neglect our own work to do yours agin! Go an' gather the dhry cow-cakes, you misert, an' bring them home in your pocket, to throw on the dunghill!"

"Do you remimber the day," said others, "you met Mr. M. an' you goin' up the street wid a cake of it in your fists, undher your shabby skirts; an' whin the gintleman wint to shake hands wid you, how he discovered your maneness? Three groans for Yallow Sam, the extortioner! A short coorse to him! Your corner's warm below for you, you villain!"

"But now, boys, for the Colonel!" they exclaimed. —"Huzza for noble Colonel B——, the rale Irish gintleman, that wouldn't see his tenants put upon by a villain!—Huzza! Hell resave yees, shout! Huzza! Huzza! Huzza! Huz—— tundher-an'-ounze, my voice is cracked! Where's his coach?—where's his

* This dialect is local

honour's coach? Come, boys, out wid it!—out wid it! Tattheration to yees, come! We'll dhraw it to the divil, to hell, an' back agin, if it plases him! Success to Colonel B——! Blood-an-turf! what'll we do for a fight? Long life to noble Colonel B——, the poor man's friend!—long life to him for ever, an' a day longer! Whoo! my darlins! Huzza!" &c.

The warm interest which the Colonel took in M'Evoy's behalf, was looked upon by the other tenants as a guarantee of his sincerity in all he promised. Their enthusiasm knew no bounds. They got out his carriage from the Inn-yard, and drew it through the town, though the Colonel himself, beyond the fact of their shouting, remained quite ignorant of what was going forward.

After Carson's departure, the Colonel's friends, having been first asked to dine with him at the inn, also took their leave, and none remained but M'Evoy, who waited with pleasing anxiety to hear what the Colonel proposed to say—for he felt certain that it would be agreeable.

"M'Evoy," said the Colonel, "I am truly sorry for what you have suffered through the villany of my agent; but I will give you redress, and allow you for what you have lost by the transaction. It is true, as I have been lately told by a person who pleaded your cause nobly and eloquently, that I can never repay you for what you have suffered. However, what we can, we will do. You are poor, I understand?"

"God he sees that, Sir; and afflicted, too, plase your honour."

"Afflicted! How is that?"

"I had a son, Sir—a blessed boy! a darlin' boy! —once our comfort, an' once we thought he'd be our pride an' our staff, but"——

The poor man's tears here flowed fast; he took up the skirt of his "Cotha More," or great coat, and, after wiping his eyes, and clearing his voice, proceeded:—

"He was always, as I said, a blessed boy, and we looked up to him always, Sir. He saw our poverty, your honour, an' he felt it, Sir, keen enough, indeed, God help him! How-an'-iver, he took it on him to go up to Munster, Sir, undher hopes of risin' us—undher the hopes, poor child—an' God knows, Sir,—if—oh, Jemmy avourneen machree!—I doubt—I doubt you sunk undher what proved too many for you!—I doubt my child's dead, Sir—him that all our hearts wor fixed upon; and if that 'ud happen to be the case, nothin', Sir—oh, nothin'—not even your kindness in doin' us justice, could make us happy. We would rather beg wid him, Sir, nor have the best in the world widout him. His poor young heart, Sir, was fixed upon the place your honour is restorin' us to; an' I'm afeard his mother, Sir, would break her heart if she thought he couldn't share our good fortune! And we don't know whether he's livin' or dead! That, Sir, is what's afflictin' us. I had some notion of goin' to look for him; but he tould us he would never write, or let us hear from him, till he'd be either one thing or other."

"I can tell you, for your satisfaction, that your son is well, M'Evoy. Believe me, he is well—I know it."

"Well! Before God, does your honour spake truth? Well! Oh. Sir, for His sake that died for us, an' for

the sake of his blessed mother, can you tell me is my darlin' son alive?"

"He is living; is in excellent health; is as well dressed as I am; and has friends as rich and as capable of assisting him as myself. But how is this? What's the matter with you? You are pale! Good God! Here, waiter! Waiter! Waiter, I say!"

The Colonel rang the bell violently, and two or three waiters entered at the same moment.

"Bring a little wine and water, one of you, and let the other two remove this man to the open window. Be quick. What do you stare at?"

In a few minutes the old man recovered, and, untying the narrow coarse cravat which he wore, wiped the perspiration off his pale face.

"Pray, don't be too much affected," said the Colonel. "Waiter, bring up refreshment—bring wine—be quiet and calm—you are weak, poor fellow—but we will strengthen you by-and-by."

"I am wake, Sir," he replied; "for, God help us! this was a hard year upon us; and we suffered what few could bear. But he's livin' Colonel. Our darlin' is livin'! Oh, Colonel, your kindness went to my heart this day afore, but that was nothin'—he's livin' an' well! On my two knees, before God, I thank you for them words! I thank you a thousand an' a thousand times more for them words, nor for what your honour did about Yallow Sam."

"Get up," said the Colonel—"get up. The proceedings of the day have produced a revulsion of feeling which has rendered you incapable of sustaining intelligence of your son. He is well,

I assure you. Bring those things to this table, waiter."

"But can your honour tell me any thing in particular about him, Sir? What he's doin'—or what he intends to do?"

"Yes! he is at a respectable boarding-school."

"Boordin'-school! But isn't boordin'-schools Protestants, Sir?"

"Not at all; he is at a Catholic boarding-school, and reading hard to be a priest, which, I hope, he will soon be. He has good friends, and you may thank *him* for being restored to your farm."

"Glory be to my Maker for that! Oh, Sir, your tenants wor desaved in you! They thought, Sir, that you wor a hard-hearted gintleman, that didn't care whether they lived or died."

"I feel that I neglected them too long, M'Evoy. Now take some refreshment: eat something, and afterwards drink a few glasses of wine. Your feelings have been much excited, and you will be the better for it. Keep up your spirits. I am going to ride, and must leave you: but if you call on me to-morrow, at one o'clock, I shall have more good news for you. We must stock your farm, and enable you to enter upon it creditably."

"Sir," said M'Evoy, "you are a Protestant; but, as I hope to enther glory, I an' my wife an' childhre will pray that your bed may be made in heaven, this night; and that your honour may be led to see the thruth an' the right coorse."

The Colonel then left him, and the simple man, on looking at the cold meat, bread, and wine before

him, raised his hands and eyes towards heaven, to thank God for his goodness, and to invoke a blessing upon his noble and munificent benefactor.

But how shall we describe the feelings of his family, when, after returning home, he related the occurrences of that day. The severe and pressing exigences under which they laboured had prevented his sons from attending the investigation that was to take place in town. Their expectations, however, were raised, and they looked out with intense anxiety for the return of their father.

At length, he was seen coming slowly up the hill; the spades were thrown aside, and the whole family assembled to hear "what was done."

The father entered in silence, sat down, and after wiping his brow, and laying down his hat, placing his staff across it upon the floor, he drew his breath deeply.

"Dominick," said the wife, "what news? What was done?"

"Vara," replied Dominick, "do you remimber the day—fair and handsome you wor then—when I first kissed your lips, as my own darlin' wife?"

"Ah, avourneen, Dominick, don't spake of them times. The happiness we had then is long gone, acushla, in one sense."

"It's before me like yestherday, Vara,—the delight that went through my heart, jist as clear as yestherday, or the blessed sun that's shinin' through the broken windy on the floor there. I remimber, Vara, saying to you that day—I don't know whether *you* remimber it or not—but *I* remimber sayin' to

you, that if I lived a thousand years, I could never feel sich happiness as I did when I first pressed you to my heart as my own wife."

"Well, but we want to hear what happened, Dominick, achora."

"Do you remimber the words, Vara?"

"Och! I do, avourneen. *Didn't they go into my heart at the time*, an' *how* could I *forget* them? But I can't bear, somehow, to look back at what we wor then, bekase I feel my heart brakin', acushla!"

"Well, Vara, look at me. Amn't I a poor wasted crathur now, in comparishment to what I was thin?"

"God he sees the change that's in you, darlin'! But sure 'twasn't your fau't, or mine either, Dominick, avillish!"

"Well, Vara, you see me now—I'm happier—before God, I'm happier—happier, a thousand degrees, than I was thin! Come to my arms, asthore machree—my heart's breakin'—but it's wid happiness—don't be frightened—it's wid joy I'm sheddin' these tears—it's wid happiness an' delight I'm cryin! Jemmy is livin', an' well, childhre—he's livin' an' well, Vara—the star of our hearts is livin', an' well, an' happy! Kneel down, childhre—kneel down! Bend before the great God, an' thank him for his kindness to your blessed brother—to our blessed son. Bless the Colonel, childhre; bless him whin you're down, Protestant an' all, as he is. Oh, bless him as if you prayed for myself, or for Jemmy, that's far away from us!"

He paused for a few minutes, bent his head upon his hands as he knelt in supplication at the chair

then resumed his seat, as did the whole family, deeply affected.

"Now, childhre," said he, "I'll tell yees all; but don't any of you be so poor a crathur as I was to-day. Bear it mild an' asy, Vara, acushla, for I know it will take a start out of you. Sure we're to go back to our own ould farm! Ay, an' what's more—oh, God of heaven, bless him!—what's more, the Colonel is to stock it for us, an' to help us; an' what is more, Yallow Sam is *out!* OUT!!"

"Out!" they exclaimed: "Jemmy well, an' Yallow Sam out! Oh, father, surely"——

"Now behave, I say. Ay, and never to come in again! But who do you think got him out?"

"Who?—why God he knows. Who *could* get him out?"

"Our son, Vara—our son, childhre: Jemmy got him out, an' got ourselves back to our farm! I had it partly from the noble Colonel's own lips, an' the remainder from Mr. M—y, that I met on my way home. But there's more to come:—sure Jemmy has friends aquil to the Colonel nimself: an' sure he's at a Catholic boordin'-school, among gintlemen's childhre, an' in a short time he'll be a priest in full ordhers."

We here draw a veil over the delight of the family. Questions upon questions, replies upon replies, sifting and cross-examinations, followed in rapid succession, until all was known that the worthy man had to communicate.

Another simple scene followed, which, as an Irishman, I write with sorrow. When the joy of the family had somewhat subsided, the father, putting his

hand in his coat pocket, pulled out several large slices of mutton.

"Along wid all, childhre," said he, "the Colonel ordhered me my dinner. I ate plinty myself, an' slipped these slices in my pocket for yees: but the devil a one o' me knows what kind o' mate it is. An' I got wine, too! Oh!—Well, they may talk, but wine *is* the dhrink! Bring me the ould knife, till I make a fair divide of it among yees. Musha, what kind o' mate can it be, for myself doesn't remimber atin' any sort, barrin' bacon, an' a bit o' beef of an odd time?"

They all ate it with an experimental air of sagacity that was rather amusing. None, however had ever tasted mutton before, and consequently the nature and quality of the meat remained, on that occasion, a profound secret to M'Evoy and his family.* It is true, they *supposed* it to be mutton; but not one of them could pronounce it to be such, from any positive knowledge of its peculiar flâvour.

"Well," said Dominick, "it's no matther what the name of it is, in regard that it's good mate, any way, for them that has enough of it."

With a fervent heart and streaming eyes did this virtuous family offer up their grateful prayers to that God whose laws they had not knowingly violated, and to whose providence they owed so much. Nor was their benefactor forgotten. The strength and energy of the Irish language, being that in which the peasantry usually pray, were well adapted to express the

* There are hundreds of thousands—yes, millions—of the poorer classes in Ireland, who have never tasted mutton!

depth of their gratitude towards a man who had, as they said, " humbled himself to look into their wants, as if he was like one of themselves !"

For upwards of ten years they had not gone to bed free from the heaviness of care, or the wasting grasp of poverty. Now their hearth was once more surrounded by peace and contentment; their burthens were removed, their pulses beat freely, and the language of happiness again was heard under their humble roof. Even sleep could not repress the vivacity of their enjoyments: they dreamt of their brother—for in the Irish heart the domestic affections hold the first place;—they dreamt of the farm to which those affections had so long yearned. They trod it again as its legitimate possessors. Its fields were brighter, its corn waved with softer murmurs to the breeze, its harvests were richer, and the song of their harvest home more cheerful than before. Their delight was tumultuous, but intense; and when they arose in the morning to

A sober certainty of waking bliss

they again knelt in worship to God with exulting hearts, and again offered up their sincere prayers in behalf of the just man who had asserted their rights against the oppressor.

Colonel B. was a man who, without having been aware of it, possessed an excellent capacity for business. The neglect of his property resulted not from want of feeling, but merely from want of consideration. There had moreover been no precedent for him to follow. He had seen no Irishman of rank

ever bestow a moment's attention on his tenantry. They had been, for the most part, absentees like himself, and felt satisfied if they succeeded in receiving their half-yearly remittance in due course, without ever reflecting for a moment upon the situation of those from whom it was drawn.

Nay, what was more—he had not seen even the *resident* gentry enter into the state and circumstances of those who lived upon their property. It was a mere accident that determined him to become acquainted with his tenants; but no sooner had he seen his duty, and come to the resolution of performing it, than the decision of his character became apparent. It is true, that within the last few years, the Irish landlords have advanced in knowledge. Many of them have introduced more improved systems of agriculture, and instructed their tenants in the best methods of applying them; but during the time of which we write, an Irish landlord only saw his tenants when canvassing them for their votes, and instructing them in dishonesty and perjury, not reflecting that he was then teaching them to practise the arts of dissimulation and fraud against himself. This was the late system: let us hope that it will be superseded by a better one; and that a landlord will think it a duty, but neither a trouble nor a condescension, to look into his own affairs, and keep an eye upon the morals and habits of his tenantry.

The Colonel, as he had said, remained more than a fortnight upon his estate; and, as he often declared since, the recollections arising from the good which he performed during that brief period, rendered it the

portion of his past life upon which he could look with most satisfaction. He did not leave the country till he saw M'Evoy and his family restored to their farm, and once more independent;—until he had redressed every well-founded complaint, secured the affections of those who had before detested him, and diffused peace and comfort amongst every family upon his estate. From thenceforth he watched the interests of his tenants, and soon found that in promoting their welfare, and instructing them in their duties, he was more his own benefactor than theirs. Before many years had elapsed, his property was wonderfully improved; he himself was called the "Lucky Landlord," "bekase," said the people, "ever since he spoke to, an' advised his tenants, we find that it's *lucky* to live undher him. The people has heart to work wid a gintleman that won't grind them; an' so sign's on it, every one thrives upon his land; an' dang my bones, but I believe a rotten stick 'ud grow on it, set in case it was thried."

In sooth, his popularity became proverbial; but it is probable, that not even his justice and humanity contributed so much to this, as the vigour with which he prosecuted his suit against "Yallow Sam," whom he compelled literally to "disgorge" the fruits of his heartless extortion. This worthy agent died soon after his disgrace, without any legitimate issue; and his property, which amounted to about fifty thousand pounds, is now inherited by a gentleman of the strictest honour and integrity. To this day his memory is detested by the people, who, with that bitterness by which they stigmatize a villain, have erected

him into a standard of dishonesty. If a man become remarkable for want of principle, they usually say—"he's as great a rogue as Yallow Sam;" or, "he is the greatest sconce that ever was in the country, *barrin'* Yallow Sam."

We now dismiss him, and request our readers at the same time, not to suppose that we have held him up as a portrait of Irish agents in general. On the contrary, we believe that they constitute a most respectable class of men, who have certainly very difficult duties to perform. The Irish landlords, we are happy to say, taught by experience, have, for the most part, both seen and felt the necessity of appointing gentlemen of property to situations so very important, and which require so much patience, consideration, and humanity, in those who fill them. We trust they will persevere in this plan; but we can assure them, that all the virtues of the best agent can never compensate, in the opinion of the people, for neglect in the "Head Landlord." One visit or act, even of nominal kindness, from *him*, will at any time, produce more attachment and gratitude among them, than a whole life spent in good offices by an agent. Like Sterne's French Beggar, they would prefer a pinch of snuff from the one, to a guinea from the other. The agent only renders them a favour, but the Head Landlord does them an honour.

Colonel B. immediately after his return home, sent for Mr. O'Brien, who waited on him with a greater degree of curiosity than perhaps he had ever felt before. The Colonel smiled as he extended his hand to him—

"Mr. O'Brien," said he, "I knew you would feel anxious to hear the result of my visit to the estate which this man with the nickname managed for me."

"*Managed*, Sir! Did you say manag*ed ?*"

"I spoke in the past time, O'Brien: he is out."

"Then your *protégé's* story was correct, Sir?"

"True to a tittle. O'Brien, there is something extraordinary in that boy; otherwise, how could it happen that a sickly, miserable-looking creature, absolutely in tatters, could have impressed us both so strongly with a sense of the injustice done ten years ago to his father? It is, indeed, remarkable."

"The boy, Colonel, deeply felt that act of injustice, and the expression of it came home to the heart."

"I have restored his father, however. The poor man and his family are once more happy. I have stocked their old farm for them;—in fact, they now enjoy comfort and independence."

"I am glad, Sir, that you have done them justice. That act, alone, will go far to redeem your character from the odium which the conduct of your agent was calculated to throw upon it."

"There is not probably in Ireland a landlord so popular as I am this moment—among my tenants on that property. Restoring M'Evoy, however, is but a small part of what I have done. Carson's pranks were incredible. He was a rack-renter of the first water. A person named Brady had paid him twenty-five guineas as a *douceur*—in other words, as a bribe—for renewing a lease for him; yet, after having received the money, he kept the poor man dangling after him, and at length told him that he

was offered a larger sum by another. In some cases he kept back the receipts, and made the poor people pay twice, which was still more iniquitous. Then, Sir, he would not take bank notes in payment. No; he was so wonderfully conscientious, and so zealously punctual, in fulfilling *my wishes*, as he told them on the subject, that nothing would pass in payment but gold. This gold, Sir, they were compelled to receive from himself, at a most oppressive premium; so that he actually fleeced them under my name, in every conceivable manner and form of villany. He is a usurer, too; and, I am told, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds: but thank heaven! he is no longer an agent of mine."

"It gives me sincere pleasure, Sir, that you have at length got correct habits of thinking upon your duties as an Irish landlord; for believe me, Colonel B., as a subject involving a great portion of national happiness or national misery, it is entitled to the deepest and most serious consideration, not only of the class to which you belong, but of the legislature. Something should be done, Sir, to improve the condition of the poorer classes. A rich country and poor inhabitants is an anomaly; and whatever is done should be prompt and effectual. If the Irish landlords looked directly into the state of their tenantry, and set themselves vigorously to the task of bettering their circumstances, they would, I am certain, establish the tranquillity and happiness of the country at large. The great secret, Colonel, of the dissentions that prevail among us is the poverty of the people. They are poor, and therefore the more easily wrought up to

outrage; they are poor, and think that *any* change must be for the better; they are not only poor, but imaginative, and the fittest recipients for those vague speculations by which they are deluded. Let their condition be improved, and the most fertile source of popular tumult and crime is closed. Let them be taught *how* to labour: let them not be bowed to the earth by rents so far above the real value of their lands. The pernicious maxims which float among them must be refuted—not by theory, but by practical lessons performed before their eyes for their own advantage. Let them be taught how to discriminate between their real interests and their prejudices; and none can teach them all this so effectually as their landlords, if they could be roused from their apathy, and induced to undertake the task. Who ever saw a poor nation without great crimes?"

"Very true, O'Brien—quite true. I am resolved to inspect personally the condition of those who reside on my other estates. But now about our *protégé?* How is he doing?"

"Extremely well. I have had a letter from him a few days ago, in which he alludes to the interest you have taken in himself and his family, with a depth of feeling truly affecting."

"When you write to him, let him know that I have placed his father in his old farm; and that Carson is out. Say I am sure he will conduct himself properly, in which case I charge myself with his expenses until he shall have accomplished his purpose. After that he may work his own way through life, and I have no doubt but he will do it well and honourably."

Colonel B——'s pledge on this occasion was nobly redeemed. Our humble hero pursued his studies with zeal and success. In due time he entered Maynooth, where he distinguished himself not simply for smartness as a student, but as a young man possessed of a mind far above the common order. During all this time nothing occurred worthy of particular remark, except that in fulfilment of his former vow, he never wrote to any of his friends; for the reader should have been told, that this was originally comprehended in the determination he had formed. He received ordination at the hands of his friend the Bishop, whom we have already introduced to the reader, and on the same day he was appointed by that gentleman to a curacy in his own parish. The Colonel, whose regard for him never cooled, presented him with fifty pounds, together with a horse, saddle, and bridle; so that he found himself in a capacity to enter upon his duties in a decent and becoming manner. Another circumstance that added considerably to his satisfaction, was the appointment of Mr. O'Brien to a parish adjoining that of the Bishop. James's afflictions had been the means of bringing the merits of that excellent man before his spiritual superior, who became much attached to him, and availed himself of the earliest opportunity of rewarding his unobtrusive piety and benevolence.

No sooner was his ordination completed, than the long suppressed yearnings after his home and kindred, came upon his spirit with a power that could not be restrained. He took leave of his friends with a beating heart, and set out on a delightful summer morning

to revisit all that had been, notwithstanding his long absence and severe trials, so strongly wrought into his memory and affections. Our readers may, therefore, suppose him on his journey home, and permit themselves to be led in imagination to the house of his former friend, Lanigan, where we must lay the scene for the present.

Lanigan's residence has the same comfortable and warm appearance which always distinguishes the habitation of the independent and virtuous man. What, however, can the stir, and bustle, and agitation which prevail in it mean? The daughters run out to a little mound, or natural terrace, beside the house, and look anxiously towards the road; then return, and almost immediately appear again, with the same intense anxiety to catch a glimpse of some one whom they expect. They look keenly, but why is it that their disappointment appears to be attended with such dismay? They go into their father's house once more, wringing their hands, and betraying all the symptoms of affliction. Here is their mother, too, coming to peer into the distance; she is rocking with that motion peculiar to Irishwomen when suffering distress. She places her open hand upon her brows that she may collect her sight to a particular spot; she is blinded by her tears; breaks out into a low wail, and returns with something like the darkness of despair on her countenance. She goes into the house, passes through the kitchen, and enters into a bed-room; seats herself on a chair beside the bed, and renews her low, but bitter wail of sorrow. Her husband is lying in that state which

the peasantry know usually precedes the agonies of death.

" For the sake of the livin' God," said he, on seeing her, " is there any sign o' them ?"

" Not yet, *a suillish;* but they will soon—they must soon, asthore, be here, an' thin your mind will be asy."

" Oh, Alley, Alley, if you could know what I suffer for 'fraid I'd die widout the priest, you'd pity me !"

" I do pity you asthore: but don't be cast down, for I have my trust in God that he won't desart you in your last hour. You did what you could, my heart's pride; you bent before him night an' mornin', and sure the poor neighbour never wint from your door widout lavin' his blessin' behind him."

The dying man raised his hands feebly from the bed-clothes; " Ah !" he exclaimed, " I thought I did a great dale, Alley : but now—but now—it appears nothin' to what I ought to a' done when I could. Still, avourneen, my life's not unpleasant when I look back at it; for I can't remimber that I ever purposely offinded a livin' mortal. All I want to satisfy me is the priest."

" No, avourneen, you did not; for it wasn't in you to offind a child."

" Alley, you'll pardon me an' forgive me acushla, if ever—if ever I did what was displasin' to you ! An' call in the childhre, till I see them about me—I want to have their forgiveness, too. I know I'll have it—for they wor good childhre, an' ever loved me."

The daughters now entered the room, exclaiming —" *Ahir dheelish*, (beloved father,) Pether is comin'

by himself, but no priest! Blessed Queen of Heaven, what will we do! Oh! father darlin', are you to die widout the Holy Ointment?"

The sick man clasped his hands, looked towards heaven, and groaned aloud.

"Oh, it's hard, this," said he. "It's hard upon me! Yet I won't be cast down. I'll trust in my good God; I'll trust in his blessed name!"

His wife on hearing that her son was returned without the priest, sat, with her face shrouded by her apron, weeping in grief that none but they who know the dependence which those belonging to her church place in its last rites can comprehend. The children appeared almost distracted; their grief had more of that stunning character which attends unexpected calamity, than of sorrow for one who is gradually drawn from life.

At length the messenger entered the room, and almost choked with tears, stated that both priests were absent that day at Conference, and would not return till late.

The hitherto moderated grief of the wife arose to a pitch much wilder than the death of her husband could, under ordinary circumstances, occasion. To die without absolution—to pass away into eternity "unanointed, unanealed"—without being purified from the inherent stains of humanity—was to her a much deeper affliction than her final separation from him. She cried in tones of the most piercing despair, and clapped her hands, as they do who weep over the dead. Had he died in the calm confidence of having received the *Viaticum*, or Sacrament before death,

his decease would have had nothing remarkably calamitous in it, beyond usual occurrences of a similar nature. Now the grief was intensely bitter in consequence of his expected departure without the priest. His sons and daughters felt it as forcibly as his wife; their lamentations were full of the strongest and sharpest agony.

For nearly three hours did they remain in this situation; poor Lanigan sinking by degrees into that collapsed state from which there is no possibility of rallying. He was merely able to speak, and recognise his family; but every moment advanced him, with awful certainty, nearer and nearer to his end.

A great number of the neighbours were now assembled, all participating in the awful feeling which predominated, and anxious to compensate by their prayers for the absence of that confidence derived by Roman Catholics during the approach of death, from the spiritual aid of the priest. They were all at prayer; the sick room and kitchen were crowded with his friends and acquaintances, many of whom knelt out before the door, and joined with loud voices in the Rosary which was offered up in his behalf.

In this crisis were they, when a horseman dressed in black, approached the house. Every head was instantly turned round, with a hope that it might be the parish priest or his curate; but, alas! they were doomed to experience a fresh disappointment. The stranger, though clerical enough in his appearance, presented a countenance with which none of them was acquainted. On glancing at the group who knelt around the door, he appeared to understand

the melancholy cause which brought them together.

"How is this?" he exclaimed. "Is there any one here sick or dying?"

"Poor Misther Lanigan, Sir, is jist departin', glory be to God! An' what is terrible all out upon himself and family, he's dyin' widout the priest. They're both at Conwhirence, Sir, an' can't come—Mr. Dogherty an' his curate."

"Make way!" said the stranger, throwing himself off his horse, and passing quickly through the people. "Show me to the sick man's room—be quick, my friends—I am a Catholic clergyman."

In a moment a passage was cleared, and the stranger found himself beside the bed of death. Grief in the room was loud and bitter; but his presence stilled it despite of what they felt.

"My dear friends," said he, "you know there should be silence in the apartment of a dying man. For shame!—for shame! Cease this clamour, it will but distract him for whom you weep, and prevent him from composing his mind for the great trial that is before him."

"Sir," said Lanigan's wife, seizing his hand in both hers, and looking distractedly in his face, "are you a priest? For heaven's sake tell us!"

"I am," he replied; "leave the room every one of you. I hope your husband is not speechless?"

"Sweet Queen of Heaven, not yet, may her name be praised! but near it, your Reverence—widin little or no time of it."

Whilst they spoke, he was engaged in putting the

stole about his neck, after which he cleared the room, and commenced hearing Lanigan's confession.

The appearance of a priest, and the consolation it produced, rallied the powers of life in the benevolent farmer. He became more collected; made a clear and satisfactory confession; received the sacrament of Extreme Unction; and felt himself able to speak with tolerable distinctness and precision. The effects of all this were astonishing. A placid serenity, full of hope and confidence, beamed from the pale and worn features of him who was but a few minutes before in a state of terror altogether indescribable. When his wife and family, after having been called in, observed this change, they immediately participated in his tranquillity. Death had been deprived of its sting, and grief of its bitterness; their sorrow was still deep, but it was not darkened by the dread of future misery. They felt for him as a beloved father, a kind husband, and a dear friend, who had lived a virtuous life, feared God, and was now about to pass into happiness.

When the rites of the church were administered, and the family again assembled around the bed, the priest sat down in a position which enabled him to see the features of this good man more distinctly.

"I would be glad," said Lanigan, "to know who it is that God in his goodness has sent to smooth my bed in death, if it 'ud be plasin', Sir, to you to tell me?"

"Do you remember," replied the priest, "a young lad whom you met some years ago on his way to Munster, as a poor scholar? You and your family were particularly kind to him; so kind that he

has never since forgotten your affectionate hospitality."

"We do, your Reverence, we do. A mild, gentle crathur he was, poor boy. I hope God prospered him."

"You see him now before you," said the priest. "I am that boy, and I thank God that I can testify, however slightly, my deep sense of the virtues which you exercised towards me; although I regret that the occasion is one of such affliction."

The farmer raised his eyes and feeble hands towards heaven. "Praise an' glory to your name, good God!" he exclaimed. "Praise an' glory to your holy name! Now I know that I'm not forgotten, when you brought back the little kindness I did that boy for *your sake*, wid so many blessins to me in the hour of my affliction an' sufferin'! Childher remimber this, now that I'm goin' to lave yees for ever! Remimber always to help the stranger, an' thim that's poor an' in sorrow. If you do, God won't forget it to you; but will bring it back to yees when you stand in need of it, as he done to me this day. You see, childher dear, how small thrifles o' that kind depend on one another. If I hadn't thought of helpin' his Reverence here, when he was young an' away from his own, he wouldn't think of callin' upon us this day, as he was passin'. You see the hand of God is in it, childhre: 'which it is, indeed, in every thing that passes about us, if we could only see it as we ought to do. Thin, but I'd like to look upon your face, Sir, if it's plasin' to you? A little more to the light, Sir. There, I now see you. Ay, indeed, it's changed for the betther it is—the same mild,

clear countenance, but not sorrowful, as when I seen it last. Suffer me to put my hand on your head, Sir; I'd like to bless you before I die, for I can't forget what you undhertook to do for your paarents."

The priest sat near him; but finding that he was scarcely able to raise his hand to his head, he knelt down, and the farmer, before he communicated the blessing, inquired—

"Musha, Sir, may I ax, wor you able to do any think to help your family as you expected?"

"God," said the priest, "made me the instrument of raising them from their poverty; they are now comfortable and happy."

"Ay! Well I knew at the time, an' I said it, that a blessin' would attind your endayvours. An' now resave *my* blessin'. May you never depart from the right way! May the blessin' of God rest upon you for ever—Amin! Childhre, I'm gettin' wake; come near me, till, till I bless you, too, for the last time! They wor good childhre, Sir—they were ever an' always good to me, an' to their poor mother, your Reverence; an'—God forgive me if it's a sin!—but I feel a great dale o' my heart an' my love fixed upon them. But sure, I'm their father, an' God, I hope, will look over it! Now, darlins, afore I bless yees, I axe your forgiveness if ever I was harsher to yees than I ought!"

The children with a simultaneous movement encircled his bed, and could not reply for some minutes.

"Never, father darlin'! Oh, never did you offind us! Don't speak in that way, or you'll break our hearts; but forgive *us*, father asthore! Oh, forgive

an' bless us, an' don't remimber aginst us, our folly an' disobedience, for it's only now that we see we warn't towards you as we ought to be. Forgive us an' pardon us!"

He then made them all kneel around his bed, and with solemn words, and an impressive manner, placed his hand upon their heads, and blessed them with a virtuous father's last blessing.

He then called for his wife, and the scene became not only more touching, but more elevated. There was an exultation in her manner, and an expression of vivid hope in her eye, arising from the fact of her husband having received, and been soothed by, the rites of her church, that gave evident proof of the unparalleled attachment borne by persons of her class to the Catholic religion. The arrival of our hero had been so unexpected, and the terrors of the tender wife for her husband's soul so great, that the administration of the sacrament almost superseded from her heart every other sensation than that of devotional triumph. Even now, in the midst of her tears, that triumph kindled in her eye, with a light that shone in melancholy beauty upon the bed of death. In proportion, however, as the parting scene—which was to be their *last*—began to work with greater power upon her sorrow, so did this expression gradually fade away. Grief for his loss resumed its dominion over her heart so strongly, that their last parting was afflicting even to look upon.

When it was over, Lanigan once more addressed the priest;

"Now, Sir," he observed, but with great difficulty,

" let me have *your* blessin' an' your prayers; an' along wid that, your Reverence, if you remimber a request I once made to you"——

" I remember it well," replied the priest; " you allude to the masses which you wished me to say for you, should I ever receive Orders. Make your mind easy on that point. I not only *shall* offer up mass for the repose of your soul, but I can assure you that I *have* mentioned you by name in every mass which I celebrated since my ordination."

He then proceeded to direct the mind of his dying benefactor to such subjects as were best calculated to comfort and strengthen him.

About day-break the next morning, this man of many virtues, after struggling rather severely for two hours preceding his death, passed into eternity, there to enjoy the recompense of a well-spent life.

When he was dead, the priest, who never left him during the night, approached the bed, and after surveying his benevolent features, now composed in the stillness of death, exclaimed—

" Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them !"

Having uttered the words aloud, he sat down beside the bed, buried his face in his handkerchief, and wept.

He was now only a short day's journey from home, and as his presence, he knew, would be rather a restraint upon a family so much in affliction, he bade them farewell, and proceeded on his way. He travelled slowly, and, as every well-known hill or lake

appeared to him, his heart beat quickly, his memory gave up its early stores, and his affections prepared themselves for the trial that was before them.

"It is better for me not to arrive," thought he, "until the family shall have returned from their daily labour, and are collected about the hearth."

In the mean time, many an impression of profound and fervid piety came over him, when he reflected upon the incontrovertible proofs of providential protection and interference, which had been, during his absence from home, under his struggles, and in his good fortune, so clearly laid before him. "Deep," he exclaimed, "is the gratitude I owe to God for this; may I never forget to acknowledge it!"

It was now about seven o'clock; the evening was calm, and the sun shone with that clear amber light which gives warmth, and the power of exciting tenderness to natural scenery. He had already gained the ascent which commanded a view of the rich sweep of country that reposed below. There it lay—his native home—his native parish—bathed in the light and glory of the hour. Its fields were green—its rivers shining like loosened silver—its meadows already studded with hay-cocks, its green pastures covered with sheep, and its unruffled lakes reflecting the hills under which they lay. Here and there a gentleman's residence rose among the distant trees, and well did he recognise the church spire that cut into the western sky on his right. It is true, nothing of the grandeur and magnificence of nature was there; every thing was simple in its beauty. The quiet charm, the serene light, the air of happiness

and peace that reposed upon all he saw, stirred up a thousand tender feelings in a heart whose gentle character resembled that of the prospect which it felt so exquisitely. The smoke of a few farm-houses and cottages rose in blue graceful columns to the air, giving just that appearance of life which was necessary; and a figure or two, with lengthened shadows, moved across the fields and meadows a little below where he stood.

But our readers need not to be told, that there was one spot which, beyond all others, rivetted his attention. On that spot his eager eye rested long and intensely. The spell of its remembrance had clung to his early heart: he had never seen it in his dreams without weeping; and often had the agitation of his imaginary sorrow awoke him with his eye lashes steeped in tears. He looked down on it steadily. At length he was moved with a strong sensation like grief: he sobbed twice or thrice, and the tears rolled in showers from his eyes. His gathering affections were relieved by this: he felt lighter, and in the same slow manner rode onward to his father's house.

To this there were two modes of access: one by a paved bridle-way, or *boreen*, that ran up directly before the door—the other by a green lane, that diverged from the *boreen* about a furlong below the house. He took the latter, certain that the family could not notice his approach, nor hear the noise of his horse's footsteps, until he could arrive at the very threshold. On dismounting, he felt that he could scarcely walk. He approached the door, however, as steadily as he could. He entered—and the family,

who had just finished their supper, rose up, as a mark of their respect to the stranger.

"Is this," he inquired, "the house in which Dominick M'Evoy lives?"

"That's my name, Sir," replied Dominick.

"The family, I trust, are—all—well? I have been desired——but no—no—I cannot—I cannot FATHER!—MOTHER!"

"It's *him*!" shrieked the mother—"It's himself! —Jemmy!"

"Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" shouted the father, with a cry of joy which might be heard far beyond the house.

"Jemmy!—our poor Jemmy!—Jemmy!!" exclaimed his brothers and sisters.

"Asy, childhre," said the father—"asy; let the mother to him—let *her* to him. Who has the right that *she* has? Vara, asthore—Vara, think of yourself. God of heaven! what is comin' over her?—Her brain's turned!"

"Father, don't remove her," said the son. "Leave her arms where they are: it's long since they encircled my neck before. Often—often would I have given the wealth of the universe to be encircled in my blessed and beloved mother's arms! Yes, yes! —Weep, my father—weep, each of you. You see those tears;—consider them as a proof that I have never forgotten you! Beloved mother! recollect yourself: she knows me not—her eyes wander!—I fear the shock has been too much for her. Place a chair at the door, and I will bring her to the air."

After considerable effort, the mother's faculties were restored so far as to be merely conscious that

our hero was her son. She had not yet shed a tear, but now she surveyed his countenance, smiled and named him, placed her hands upon him, and examined his dress with a singular blending of conflicting emotions, but still without being thoroughly collected.

"I will speak to her," said Jemmy, "in Irish, it will go directly to her heart:—*Mhair, avourneen, tha ma, laht, anish!*—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last."

"*Shamus, aroon, avick ma chree, wuil thu lhum? wuil thu—wuil thu lhum?*—Jemmy, my beloved, son of my heart, are you with me?—are you—are you with me?"

"*Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.*—It is *I* who am with you, beloved mother of my heart!"

She smiled again—but only for a moment. She looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.

We are incapable of describing this scene further. Our readers must be contented to know, that the delight and happiness of our hero's whole family were complete. Their son, after many years of toil and struggle, had at length succeeded, by a virtuous course of action, in raising them from poverty to comfort, and in effecting his own object, which was, to become a member of the Catholic priesthood. During all his trials he never failed to rely on God; and it is seldom that those who rely upon Him, when striving

to attain a laudable purpose, are ever ultimately disappointed.

* * * * * *

We regret to inform our readers, that the poor scholar is dead! He did not, in fact, long survive the accomplishment of his wishes. But as we had the particulars of his story from his nearest friends, we thought his virtues of too exalted a nature to pass into oblivion without some record, however humble. He died as he had lived—the friend of God and of man.

WILDGOOSE LODGE.

WILDGOOSE LODGE.

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I HAD read the anonymous summons, but from its general import, I believed it to be one of those special meetings convened for some purpose affecting the usual objects and proceedings of the body;—at least the terms in which it was conveyed to me had nothing extraordinary or mysterious in them, beyond the simple fact, that it was not to be a general but a select meeting: this mark of confidence flattered me, and I determined to attend punctually. I was, it is true, desired to keep the circumstance entirely to myself, but there was nothing startling in this, for I had often received summonses of a similar nature. I therefore resolved to attend, according to the letter of my instructions, "on the next night, at the solemn hour of midnight, to deliberate and act upon such matters as should then and there be submitted to my consideration." The morning after I received this message, I arose and resumed my usual occupations;

but, from whatever cause it may have proceeded, I felt a sense of approaching evil hang heavily upon me: the beats of my pulse were languid, and an undefinable feeling of anxiety pervaded my whole spirit; even my face was pale, and my eye so heavy, that my father and brothers concluded me to be ill; an opinion which I thought at the time to be correct, for I felt exactly that kind of depression which precedes a severe fever. I could not understand what I experienced, nor can I yet, except by supposing that there is in human nature some mysterious faculty, by which, in coming calamities, the dread of some fearful evil is anticipated, and that it is possible to catch a dark presentiment of the sensations which they subsequently produce. For my part I can neither analyze nor define it; but on that day I knew it by painful experience, and so have a thousand others in similar circumstances.

It was about the middle of winter. The day was gloomy and tempestuous almost beyond any other I remember: dark clouds rolled over the hills about me, and a close sleet-like rain fell in slanting drifts that chased each other rapidly towards the earth on the course of the blast. The out-lying cattle sought the closest and calmest corners of the fields for shelter; the trees and young groves were tossed about, for the wind was so unusually high that it swept in hollow gusts through them, with that hoarse murmur which deepens so powerfully on the mind the sense of dreariness and desolation.

As the shades of night fell, the storm, if possible, increased. The moon was half gone, and only a few

stars were visible by glimpses, as a rush of wind left a temporary opening in the sky. I had determined, if the storm should not abate, to incur any penalty rather than attend the meeting; but the appointed hour was distant, and I resolved to be decided by the future state of the night.

Ten o'clock came, but still there was no change; eleven passed, and on opening the door to observe if there were any likelihood of its clearing up, a blast of wind, mingled with rain, nearly blew me off my feet. At length it was approaching to the hour of midnight; and on examining a third time, I found it had calmed a little, and no longer rained.

I instantly got my oak stick, muffled myself in my great coat, strapped my hat about my ears, and, as the place of meeting was only a quarter of a mile distant, I presently set out.

The appearance of the heavens was lowering and angry, particularly in that point where the light of the moon fell against the clouds, from a seeming chasm in them, through which alone she was visible. The edges of this chasm were faintly bronzed, but the dense body of the masses that hung piled on each side of her, was black and impenetrable to sight. In no other point of the heavens was there any part of the sky visible; a deep veil of clouds overhung the horizon, yet was the light sufficient to give occasional glimpses of the rapid shifting which took place in this dark canopy, and of the tempestuous agitation with which the midnight storm swept to and fro beneath it.

At length I arrived at a long slated house, situated

in a solitary part of the neighbourhood; a little below it ran a small stream, which was now swollen above its banks, and rushing with mimic roar over the flat meadows beside it. The appearance of the bare slated building in such a night was particularly sombre, and to those, like me, who knew the purpose to which it was usually devoted, it was or ought to have been, peculiarly so. There it stood, silent and gloomy, without any appearance of human life or enjoyment about or within it. As I approached the moon once more had broken out of the clouds, and shone dimly upon the wet, glittering slates and windows, with a death-like lustre, that gradually faded away as I left the point of observation, and entered the folding-door. It was the parish chapel.

The scene which presented itself here was in keeping not only with the external appearance of the house, but with the darkness, the storm, and the hour, which was now a little after midnight. About eighty persons were sitting in dead silence upon the circular steps of the altar. They did not seem to move; and as I entered and advanced, the echo of my footsteps rang through the building with a lonely distinctness, which added to the solemnity and mystery of the circumstances about me. The windows were secured with shutters on the inside, and on the altar a candle was lighted, which burned dimly amid the surrounding darkness, and lengthened the shadow of the altar itself, and those of six or seven persons who stood on its upper steps, until they mingled in the obscurity which shrouded the lower end of the chapel. The faces of the men who sat on

the altar steps were not distinctly visible, yet their prominent and more characteristic features were in sufficient relief, and I observed, that some of the most malignant and reckless spirits in the parish were assembled. In the eyes of those who stood at the altar, and whom I knew to be invested with authority over the others, I could perceive gleams of some latent and ferocious purpose, kindled, as I soon observed, into a fiercer expression of vengeance, by the additional excitement of ardent spirits, with which they had stimulated themselves to a point of determination that mocked at the apprehension of all future responsibility, either in this world or the next.

The welcome which I received on joining them was far different from the boisterous good-humour that used to mark our greetings on other occasions: just a nod of the head from this or that person, on the part of those *who sat*, with a *ghud dhemur tha thu?** in a suppressed voice, even below a common whisper: but from the standing group, who were evidently the projectors of the enterprise, I received a convulsive grasp of the hand, accompanied by a fierce and desperate look, that seemed to search my eye and countenance, to try if I were a person not likely to shrink from whatever they had resolved to execute. It is surprising to think of the powerful expression which a moment of intense interest or great danger is capable of giving to the eye, the features, and the slightest actions, especially in those whose station in society does not require them to constrain nature, by the force of social courtesies, into habits that conceal

* How are you?

their natural emotions. None of the standing group spoke; but as each of them wrung my hand in silence, his eye was fixed on mine, with an expression of drunken confidence and secrecy, and an insolent determination not to be gainsayed without peril. If looks could be translated with certainty, they seemed to say, "we are bound upon a project of vengeance, and if you do not join us, remember that we *can* revenge." Along with this grasp, they did not forget to remind me of the common bond by which we were united, for each man gave me the secret grip of Ribbonism in a manner that made the joints of my fingers ache for some minutes afterwards.

There was one present, however—the highest in authority—whose actions and demeanour were calm and unexcited. He seemed to labour under no unusual influence whatever, but evinced a serenity so placid and philosophical, that I attributed the silence of the sitting group, and the restraint which curbed in the out-breaking passions of those who *stood*, entirely to his presence. He was a schoolmaster, who taught his daily school in that chapel, and acted also, on Sunday, in the capacity of clerk to the priest—an excellent and amiable old man, who knew little of his illegal connexions and atrocious conduct.

When the ceremonies of brotherly recognition and friendship were past, the Captain (by which title I shall designate the last-mentioned person) stooped, and, raising a jar of whiskey on the corner of the altar, held a wine-glass to its neck, which he filled, and with a calm nod, handed it to me to drink. I shrunk back, with an instinctive horror, at the

profaneness of such an act, in the house, and on the altar of God, and peremptorily refused to taste the proffered draught. He smiled mildly at what he considered my superstition, and added quietly, and in a low voice, "You'll be wantin' it, I'm thinkin', afther the wettin' you got."

"Wet or dry," said I,—

"Stop man!" he replied, in the same tone; "spake low. But why wouldn't you take the whiskey? Sure there's as holy people to the fore as you: didn't they all take it? An' I wish we may never do worse nor dhrink a harmless glass o' whiskey, to keep the cowld out, any way."

"Well," said I, "I'll jist trust to God and the consequences, for the cowld, Paddy, ma bouchal; but a blessed dhrop of it won't be crossin' my lips, avick; so no more ghosther about it;—dhrink it yourself, if you like. Maybe you want it as much as I do; wherein I've the patthern of a good big-coat upon me, so thick, your sowl, that if it was rainin' bullocks, a dhrop wouldn't get undher the nap of it."

He gave me a calm, but keen glance, as I spoke:

"Well, Jim," said he, "it's a good comrade you've got for the weather that's in it; but, in the mane time, to set you a dacent patthern, I'll just take this myself,"—saying which, with the jar still upon its side, and the fore-finger of his left hand in its neck, he swallowed the spirits—"It's the first I dhrank to-night," he added, "nor would I dhrink it now, only to show you that I've heart an' spirit to do the thing that we're all bound an' sworn to, when the proper time comes;" after which he laid down the

glass, and turned up the jar, with much coolness, upon the altar.

During our conversation, those who had been summoned to this mysterious meeting were pouring in fast; and as each person approached the altar, he received from one to two or three glasses of whiskey, according as he chose to limit himself; but, to do them justice, there were not a few of those present, who, in despite of their own desire, and the Captain's express invitation, refused to taste it in the house of God's worship. Such, however, as were scrupulous he afterwards recommended to take it on the outside of the chapel door, which they did, as, by that means, the sacrilege of the act was supposed to be evaded.

About one o'clock they were all assembled except six; at least so the Captain asserted, on looking at a written paper.

"Now, boys," said he, in the same low voice, "we are all present except the thraitors, whose names I am goin' to read to you; not that we are to count thim thraitors, till we know whether or not it was in their power to come. Any how, the night's terrible —but, boys, you're to know, that neither fire nor wather is to prevint yees, when duly summoned to attind a meeting—particularly whin the summons is widout a name, as you have been told that there is always something of consequence to be done *thin*."

He then read out the names of those who were absent, in order that the real cause of their absence might be ascertained, declaring that they would be dealt with accordingly. After this, with his usual

caution, he shut and bolted the door, and having put the key in his pocket, ascended the steps of the altar, and for some time traversed the little platform from which the priest usually addresses the congregation.

Until this night I had never contemplated the man's countenance with any particular interest; but as he walked the platform, I had an opportunity of observing him more closely. He was slight in person, apparently not thirty; and, on a first view, appeared to have nothing remarkable in his dress or features. I, however, was not the only person whose eyes were fixed upon him at that moment; in fact every one present observed him with equal interest, for hitherto he had kept the object of the meeting perfectly secret, and of course we all felt anxious to know it. It was while he traversed the platform that I scrutinized his features with a hope, if possible, to glean from them some evidence of what was passing within him. I could, however, mark but little, and that little was at first rather from the intelligence which seemed to subsist between him and those whom I have already mentioned as *standing* against the altar, than from any indication of his own. Their gleaming eyes were fixed upon him with an intensity of savage and demon-like hope, which blazed out in flashes of malignant triumph, as upon turning, he threw a cool but rapid glance at them, to intimate the progress he was making in the subject to which he devoted the undivided energies of his mind. But in the course of his meditation, I could observe, on one or two occasions, a dark shade come over his countenance, that contracted his brow into a deep

furrow, and it was then, for the first time, that I saw the satanic expression of which his face, by a very slight motion of its muscles, was capable. His hands, during this silence, closed and opened convulsively; his eyes shot out two or three baleful glances, first to his confederates, and afterwards vacantly into the deep gloom of the lower part of the chapel; his teeth ground against each other, like those of a man whose revenge burns to reach a distant enemy, and finally, after having wound himself up to a certain determination, his features relapsed into their original calm and undisturbed expression.

At this moment a loud laugh, having something supernatural in it, rang out wildly from the darkness of the chapel; he stopped, and putting his open hand over his brows, peered down into the gloom, and said calmly in Irish, "*Bee dhu husth; ha nihl anam inh*:—hold your tongue, it is not yet the time."

Every eye was now directed to the same spot, but, in consequence of its distance from the dim light on the altar, none could perceive the person from whom the laugh proceeded. It was, by this time, near two o'clock in the morning.

He now stood for a few moments on the platform, and his chest heaved with a depth of anxiety equal to the difficulty of the design he wished to accomplish:

"Brothers," said he—"for we are all brothers—sworn upon all that's blessed an' holy, to obey whatever them that's over us, *manin' among ourselves*,* wishes us to do—are you now ready, in the name of God, upon whose althar I stand, to fulfil yer oaths?"

* In opposition to the constituted authorities.

The words were scarcely uttered, when those who had *stood* beside the altar during the night, sprang from their places, and descending its steps rapidly, turned round, and raising their arms, exclaimed, " By all that's sacred an' holy, we're willin'."

In the mean time, those who *sat* upon the steps of the altar, instantly rose, and following the example of those who had just spoken, exclaimed after them, " To be sure—by all that's sacred an' holy, we're willin'."

" Now boys," said the Captain, " ar'nt yees big fools for your pains? an' one of yees doesn't know what I mane."

" You're our Captain," said one of those who had stood at the altar, " an' has yer ordhers from higher quarthers; of coorse, whatever ye command upon us we're bound to obey you in."

" Well," said he, smiling, " I only wanted to thry yees; an' by the oath yees tuck, there's not a captain in the county has as good a right to be proud of his min as I have. Well, yees won't rue it, maybe, when the right time comes; and for that same rason every one of yees must have a glass from the jar; thim that won't dhrink it *in* the chapel can dhrink it *widout;* an' here goes to open the door for them."

He then distributed another glass to every man who would accept it, and brought the jar afterwards to the chapel door, to satisfy the scruples of those who would not drink within. When this was performed, and all duly excited, he proceeded:—

" Now, brothers, you are solemnly sworn to obay me, and I'm sure there's no thraithur here that 'ud

parjure himself for a thrifle; but *I'm* sworn to obay them that's above me, manin' still among ourselves; an' to show you that I don't scruple to do it, here goes!"

He then turned round, and taking the Missal between his hands placed it upon the altar. Hitherto every word was uttered in a low precautionary tone; but on grasping the book, he again turned round, and looking upon his confederates with the same satanic expression which marked his countenance before, exclaimed, in a voice of deep determination:

"By this sacred an' holy book of God, I will perform the action which we have met this night to accomplish, be that what it may; an' this I swear upon God's book, an' God's althar!"

On concluding he struck the book violently with his open hand.

At this moment the candle which burned before him went suddenly out, and the chapel was wrapped in pitchy darkness; the sound as if of rushing wings fell upon our ears, and fifty voices dwelt upon the last words of his oath with wild and supernatural tones, that seemed to echo and to mock what he had sworn. There was a pause, and an exclamation of horror from all present: but the Captain was too cool and steady to be disconcerted. He immediately groped about until he got the candle, and proceeding calmly to a remote corner of the chapel, took up a half-burned turf which lay there, and after some trouble, succeeded in lighting it again. He then explained what had taken place; which indeed was easily done, as the candle happened to be extinguished by a

pigeon which sat directly above it. The chapel, I should have observed, was at this time, like many country chapels, unfinished inside, and the pigeons of a neighbouring dove-cote had built nests among the rafters of the unceiled roof; which circumstance also explained the rushing of the wings, for the birds had been affrighted by the sudden loudness of the noise. The mocking voices were nothing but the echoes, rendered naturally more awful by the scene, the mysterious object of the meeting, and the solemn hour of the night.

When the candle was again lighted, and these startling circumstances accounted for, the persons whose vengeance had been deepening more and more during the night, rushed to the altar in a body, where each, in a voice trembling with passionate eagerness, repeated the oath, and as every word was pronounced, the same echoes heightened the wildness of the horrible ceremony, by their long and unearthly tones. The countenances of these human tigers were livid with suppressed rage; their knit brows, compressed lips, and kindled eyes, fell under the dim light of the taper, with an expression calculated to sicken any heart not absolutely diabolical.

As soon as this dreadful rite was completed, we were again startled by several loud bursts of laughter, which proceeded from the lower darkness of the chapel, and the captain, on hearing them, turned to the place, and reflecting for a moment, said in Irish, "*Gutsho nish, avohelhce*—come hither now, boys."

A rush immediately took place from the corner in which they had secreted themselves all the night;

and seven men appeared, whom we instantly recognised as brothers and cousins of certain persons who had been convicted, some time before, for breaking into the house of an honest poor man in the neighbourhood, from whom, after having treated him with barbarous violence, they took away such fire-arms as he kept for his own protection.

It was evidently not the captain's intention to have produced these persons until the oath should have been generally taken, but the exulting mirth with which they enjoyed the success of his scheme betrayed them, and put him to the necessity of bringing them forward somewhat before the concerted moment.

The scene which now took place was beyond all power of description; peals of wild, fiend-like yells rang through the chapel, as the party which *stood* on the altar, and that which had crouched in the darkness, met; wringing of hands, leaping in triumph, striking of sticks and fire-arms against the ground and the altar itself, dancing and cracking of fingers, marked the triumph of some hellish determination. Even the Captain for a time was unable to restrain their fury; but, at length, he mounted the platform before the altar once more, and with a stamp of his foot, recalled their attention to himself and the matter in hand.

"Boys," said he, "enough of this, and too much; an' well for us it is that the chapel is in a lonely place, or our foolish noise might do us no good. Let thim that swore so manfully jist now, stand a one side, till the rest kiss the book one by one."

The proceedings, however, had by this time taken

too fearful a shape for even the Captain to compel them to a blindfold oath; the first man he called, flatly refused to answer, until he should hear the nature of the service that was required. This was echoed by the remainder, who taking courage from the firmness of this person, declared generally, that until they first knew the business they were to execute, none of them would take the oath. The Captain's lip quivered slightly, and his brow again became knit with the same hellish expression, which I have remarked gave him so much the appearance of an embodied fiend; but this speedily passed away, and was succeeded by a malignant sneer, in which lurked, if there ever did in a sneer, "a laughing devil," calmly, determinedly atrocious.

"It wasn't worth yer whiles to refuse the oath," said he mildly, "for the truth is, I had next to nothing for yees to do. Not a hand, maybe, would have to *rise*, only jist to look on, an' if any resistance would be made, to show yourselves; yer numbers would soon make them see that resistance would be no use whatever in the present case. At all evints, the oath of *secresy must* be taken, or woe be to him that will refuse *that;* he won't know the day, nor the hour, nor the minute, when he'll be made a spatch-cock ov."

He then turned round, and placing his right hand on the Missal, swore, "In the presence of God, and before his holy altar, that whatever might take place that night, he would keep secret, from man or mortal, except the priest, and that neither bribery, nor imprisonment, nor death, would wring it from his heart."

Having done this, he again struck the book violently, as if to confirm the energy with which he swore, and then calmly descending the steps, stood with a serene countenance, like a man conscious of having performed a good action. As this oath did not pledge those who refused to take the other to the perpetration of any specific crime, it was readily taken by all present. Preparations were then made to execute what was intended: the half-burned turf was placed in a little pot; another glass of whiskey was distributed; and the door being locked by the Captain, who kept the key as parish clerk and master, the crowd departed silently from the chapel.

The moment those who lay in the darkness during the night, made their appearance at the altar, we knew at once the persons we were to visit; for, as I said before, they were related to the miscreants whom one of those persons had convicted, in consequence of their midnight attack upon himself and his family. The Captain's object in keeping them unseen was, that those present, not being aware of the duty about to be imposed on them, might have less hesitation about swearing to its fulfilment. Our conjectures were correct, for on leaving the chapel we directed our steps to the house in which this devoted man resided.

The night was still stormy, but without rain; it was rather dark, too, though not so as to prevent us from seeing the clouds careering swiftly through the air. The dense curtain which had overhung and obscured the horizon, was now broken, and large sections of the sky were clear, and thinly studded with stars that

looked dim and watery, as did indeed the whole firmament; for in some places black clouds were still visible, threatening a continuance of tempestuous weather. The road appeared washed and gravelly; every dike was full of yellow water; and every little rivulet and larger stream dashed its hoarse music in our ears; every blast, too, was cold, fierce, and wintry, sometimes driving us back to a stand still, and again, when a turn in the road would bring it in our backs, whirling us along for a few steps with involuntary rapidity. At length the fated dwelling became visible, and a short consultation was held in a sheltered place, between the Captain and the two parties who seemed so eager for its destruction. Their fire-arms were now loaded, and their bayonets and short pikes, the latter shod and pointed with iron, were also got ready. The live coal which was brought in the small pot had become extinguished; but to remedy this, two or three persons from a remote part of the county entered a cabin on the wayside, and, under pretence of lighting their own and their comrades' pipes, procured a coal of fire, for so they called a lighted turf. From the time we left the chapel until this moment a profound silence had been maintained, a circumstance which, when I considered the number of persons present, and the mysterious and dreaded object of their journey, had a most appalling effect upon my spirits.

At length we arrived within fifty perches of the house, walking in a compact body, and with as little noise as possible; but it seemed as if the very elements had conspired to frustrate our design, for on

advancing within the shade of the farm-hedge, two or three persons found themselves up to the middle in water, and on stooping to ascertain more accurately the state of the place, we could see nothing but one immense sheet of it,—spread like a lake over the meadows which surrounded the spot we wished to reach.

Fatal night! The very recollection of it, when associated with the fearful tempests of the elements, grows, if that were possible, yet more wild and revolting. Had we been engaged in any innocent or benevolent enterprise, there was something in our situation just then that had a touch of interest in it to a mind imbued with a relish for the savage beauties of nature. There we stood, about a hundred and thirty in number, our dark forms bent forward, peering into the dusky expanse of water, with its dim gleams of reflected light, broken by the weltering of the mimic waves into ten thousand fragments, whilst the few stars that overhung it in the firmament, appeared to shoot through it in broken lines, and to be multiplied fifty-fold in the gloomy mirror on which we gazed.

Over us was a stormy sky, and around us a darkness through which we could only distinguish, in outline, the nearest objects, whilst the wild wind swept strongly and dismally upon us. When it was discovered that the common pathway to the house was inundated, we were about to abandon our object and return home. The Captain, however, stooped down low for a moment, and almost closing his eyes, looked along the surface of the waters, and then rising himself very calmly, said, in his usual quiet

tone, "Yees needn't go back, boys, I've found a way; jist follow me."

He immediately took a more circuitous direction, by which we reached a causeway that had been raised for the purpose of giving a free passage to and from the house, during such inundations as the present. Along this we had advanced more than half way, when we discovered a breach in it, which, as afterwards appeared, had that night been made by the strength of the flood. This, by means of our sticks and pikes, we found to be about three feet deep, and eight yards broad. Again we were at a loss how to proceed, when the fertile brain of the Captain devised a method of crossing it.

"Boys," said he, "of coorse you've all played at leap-frog; very well, strip and go in, a dozen of you, lean one upon the back of another from this to the opposite bank, where one must stand facing the outside man, both their shoulders agin one another, that the outside man may be supported. Then *we* can creep over you, an' a dacent bridge you'll be, any way."

This was the work of only a few minutes, and in less than ten we were all safely over.

Merciful heaven! how I sicken at the recollection of what is to follow! On reaching the dry bank, we proceeded instantly, and in profound silence, to the house; the Captain divided us into companies, and then assigned to each division its proper station. The two parties who had been so vindictive all the night, he kept about himself; for of those who were present, they only were in his confidence, and knew his

nefarious purpose; their number was about fifteen. Having made these dispositions, he, at the head of about five of them, approached the house on the windy side, for the fiend possessed a coolness which enabled him to seize upon every possible advantage. That he had combustibles about him was evident, for in less than fifteen minutes nearly one half of the house was enveloped in flames. On seeing this, the others rushed over to the spot where he and his gang were standing, and remonstrated earnestly, but in vain; the flames now burst forth with renewed violence, and as they flung their strong light upon the faces of the foremost group, I think hell itself could hardly present any thing more satanic than their countenances, now worked up into a paroxysm of infernal triumph, at their own revenge. The Captain's look had lost all its calmness, every feature started out into distinct malignity, the curve in his brow was deep, and ran up to the root of the hair, dividing his face into two segments, that did not seem to have been designed for each other. His lips were half open, and the corners of his mouth a little brought back on each side, like those of a man expressing intense hatred and triumph over an enemy who is in the death struggle under his grasp. His eyes blazed from beneath his knit eye-brows with a fire that seemed to be lighted up in the infernal pit itself. It is unnecessary, and only painful, to describe the rest of his gang; demons might have been proud of such horrible visages as they exhibited; for they worked under all the power of hatred, revenge, and joy; and these passions blended into one terrible

Designed & Etched by W. H Brooke F.S.A

"Another word" said the Captain "an' we'll make a corpse o' ye"

scowl, enough almost to blast any human eye that would venture to look upon it.

When the others attempted to intercede for the lives of the inmates, there were at least fifteen guns and pistols levelled at them.

" Another word," said the Captain, " an' you're a corpse where you stand, or the first man who will dare to spake for them; no, no, it wasn't to spare them we came here. ' No mercy' is the pass-word for the night, an' by the sacred oath I swore beyant in the chapel, any one among yees that will attempt to show it, will find none at my hand. Surround the house, boys, I tell ye, I hear them stirring. ' No quarther—no mercy,' is the ordher of the night."

Such was his command over these misguided creatures, that in an instant there was a ring round the house to prevent the escape of the unhappy inmates, should the raging element give them time to attempt it; for none present durst withdraw themselves from the scene, not only from an apprehension of the Captain's present vengeance, or that of his gang, but because they knew that even had they then escaped, an early and certain death awaited them from a quarter against which they had no means of defence. The hour now was about half-past two o'clock. Scarcely had the last words escaped from the Captain's lips, when one of the windows of the house was broken, and a human head, having the hair in a blaze, was described, apparently a woman's, if one might judge by the profusion of burning tresses, and the softness of the tones, notwithstanding that it called, or rather shrieked, aloud, for help and mercy.

The only reply to this was the whoop from the Captain and his gang, of " No mercy—no mercy!" and that instant the former, and one of the latter, rushed to the spot, and ere the action could be perceived, the head was transfixed with a bayonet and a pike, both having entered it together. The word mercy was divided in her mouth; a short silence ensued, the head hung down on the window, but was instantly tossed back into the flames!

This action occasioned a cry of horror from all present, except the *gang* and their leader, which startled and enraged the latter so much, that he ran towards one of them, and had his bayonet, now reeking with the blood of its innocent victim, raised to plunge it in his body, when, dropping the point, he said in a piercing whisper, that hissed in the ears of all: " It's no use *now*, you know; if one's to hang, all will hang; so our safest way, you persave, is to lave none of them to tell the story, Ye *may* go now, if you wish; but it won't save a hair of your heads. You cowardly set! I knew if I had tould yees the sport, that none of yees, except my *own* boys, would come, so I jist played a thrick upon you; but remimber what you are sworn to, and stand to the oath ye tuck."

Unhappily, notwithstanding the wetness of the preceding weather, the materials of the house were extremely combustible; the whole dwelling was now one body of glowing flame, yet the shouts and shrieks within rose awfully above its crackling and the voice of the storm, for the wind once more blew in gusts, and with great violence. The doors and windows

were all torn open, and such of those within as had escaped the flames rushed towards them, for the purpose of further escape, and of claiming mercy at the hands of their destroyers; but whenever they appeared, the unearthly cry of "NO MERCY" rung upon their ears for a moment, and for a moment only, for they were flung back at the points of the weapons which the demons had brought with them to make the work of vengeance more certain.

As yet there were many persons in the house, whose cry for life was strong as despair, and who clung to it with all the awakened powers of reason and instinct. The ear of man could hear nothing so strongly calculated to stifle the demon of cruelty and revenge within him, as the long and wailing shrieks which rose beyond the elements, in tones that were carried off rapidly upon the blast, until they died away in the darkness that lay behind the surrounding hills. Had not the house been in a solitary situation, and the hour the dead of night, any person sleeping within a moderate distance must have heard them, for such a cry of sorrow rising into a yell of despair was almost sufficient to have awakened the dead. It was lost, however, upon the hearts and ears that heard it: to them, though in justice be it said, to only comparalively a few of them, it was as delightful as the tones of soft and entrancing music.

The claims of the surviving sufferers were now modified; they supplicated merely to suffer death *by the weapons of their enemies;* they were willing to bear that, provided they should be allowed to escape from the flames; but no—the horrors of the conflagra-

tion were calmly and malignantly gloried in by their merciless assassins, who deliberately flung them back into all their tortures. In the course of a few minutes a man appeared upon the side-wall of the house, nearly naked; his figure, as he stood against the sky in horrible relief, was so finished a picture of woe-begone agony and supplication, that it is yet as distinct in my memory as if I were again present at the scene. Every muscle, now in motion by the powerful agitation of his sufferings, stood out upon his limbs and neck, giving him an appearance of desperate strength, to which by this time he must have been wrought up; the perspiration poured from his frame, and the veins and arteries of his neck were inflated to a surprising thickness. Every moment he looked down into the flames which were rising to where he stood; and as he looked, the indescribable horror which flitted over his features might have worked upon the devil himself to relent. His words were few:—

"My child," said he, "is still safe, she is an infant, a young crathur that never harmed you, nor any one—she is still safe. Your mothers, your wives, have young innocent childhre like it. Oh, spare her, think for a moment that it's one of your own: spare it, as you hope to meet a just God, or if you don't, in mercy shoot me first—put an end to me, before I see her burned!"

The Captain approached him coolly and deliberately. "You'll prosecute no one now, you bloody informer," said he: "you'll convict no more boys for takin' an ould gun an' pistol from you.

or for givin' you a neighbourly knock or two into the bargain."

Just then, from a window opposite him, proceeded the shrieks of a woman, who appeared at it, with the infant in her arms. She herself was almost scorched to death; but, with the presence of mind and humanity of her sex, she was about to put the little babe out of the window. The Captain noticed this, and, with characteristic atrocity, thrust, with a sharp bayonet, the little innocent, along with the person who endeavoured to rescue it, into the red flames, where they both perished. This was the work of an instant. Again he approached the man: "Your child is a coal now," said he, with deliberate mockery; "I pitched it in myself, on the point of this,"—showing the weapon—"an' now is your turn,"—saying which he clambered up, by the assistance of his gang, who stood with a front of pikes and bayonets bristling to receive the wretched man, should he attempt, in his despair, to throw himself from the wall. The Captain got up, and placing the point of his bayonet against his shoulder, flung him into the fiery element that raged behind him. He uttered one wild and terrific cry, as he fell back, and no more. After this nothing was heard but the crackling of the fire, and the rushing of the blast: all that had possessed life within were consumed, amounting either to eleven or fifteen persons.

When this was accomplished, those who took an active part in the murder, stood for some time about the conflagration; and as it threw its red light upon their fierce faces and rough persons, soiled as they

now were with smoke and black streaks of ashes, the scene seemed to be changed to hell, the murderers to spirits of the damned, rejoicing over the arrival and the torture of some guilty soul. The faces of those who kept aloof from the slaughter were blanched to the whiteness of death: some of them fainted, and others were in such agitation that they were compelled to lean on their comrades. They became actually powerless with horror; yet to such a scene were they brought by the pernicious influence of Ribbonism.

It was only when the last victim went down, that the conflagration shot up into the air with most unbounded fury. The house was large, deeply thatched, and well furnished; and the broad red pyramid rose up with fearful magnificence towards the sky. Abstractedly it had sublimity, but now it was associated with nothing in my mind but blood and terror. It was not, however, without a purpose that the Captain and his gang stood to contemplate its effect. "Boys," said he, "we had betther be sartin that all's safe; who knows but there might be some of the sarpents crouchin' under a hape o' rubbish, to come out an' gibbet us to-morrow or next day: we had betther wait a while, any how, if it was only to see the blaze."

Just then the flames rose majestically to a surprising height. Our eyes followed their direction; and we perceived, for the first time, that the dark clouds above, together with the intermediate air, appeared to reflect back, or rather to have caught the red hue of the fire. The hills and country about us

appeared with an alarming distinctness; but the most picturesque part of it was the effect or reflection of the blaze on the floods that spread over the surrounding plains. These, in fact, appeared to be one broad mass of liquid copper, for the motion of the breaking waters caught from the blaze of the high waving column, as reflected in them, a glaring light, which eddied, and rose, and fluctuated, as if the flood itself had been a lake of molten fire.

Fire, however, destroys rapidly. In a short time the flames sank—became weak and flickering—by and by, they shot out only in fits—the crackling of the timbers died away—the surrounding darkness deepened—and, ere long, the faint light was overpowered by the thick volumes of smoke that rose from the ruins of the house, and its murdered inhabitants.

"Now, boys," said the Captain, "all is safe—we may go. Remember, every man of you, what you've sworn this night, on the book an' altar of God—not on a heretic Bible. If you perjure yourselves, you may hang us; but let me tell you, for your comfort, that if you do, there is them livin' that will take care the lase of your own lives will be but short."

After this we dispersed every man to his own home.

Reader,—not many months elapsed ere I saw the bodies of this Captain, whose name was Patrick Devann, and all those who were actively concerned in the perpetration of this deed of horror, withering in the wind, where they hung gibbetted, near the scene of their nefarious villany; and while I inwardly thanked heaven for my own narrow and almost undeserved escape, I thought in my heart how seldom, even in

this world, justice fails to overtake the murderer, and to enforce the righteous judgment of God—that "whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

*** This tale of terror is, unfortunately, too true. The scene of hellish murder detailed in it, lies at Wildgoose Lodge, in the county of Louth, within about four miles of Carrickmacross, and nine of Dundalk. No such multitudinous murder has occurred, under similar circumstances, except the burning of the Sheas in the county of Tipperary. The name of the family burned in Wildgoose Lodge was Lynch. One of them had, shortly before this fatal night, prosecuted and convicted some of the neighbouring Ribbonmen, who visited him with severe marks of their displeasure, in consequence of his having refused to enrol himself as a member of their body.

The language of the story is partly fictitious; but the facts are pretty closely such as were developed during the trial of the murderers. Both parties were Roman Catholics. There were, if the author mistake not, either twenty-five or twenty-eight of those who took an active part in the burning, hanged and gibbetted in different parts of the county of Louth. Devann, the ringleader, hung for some months in chains, within about a hundred yards of his own house, and about half a mile from Wildgoose Lodge. His mother could neither go into nor out of her cabin, without seeing his body swinging from the gibbet. Her usual exclamation on looking at him was—"God be good to the sowl of my poor marthyr!" The peasantry, too, frequently exclaimed, on seeing him, "Poor Paddy!" A gloomy fact that speaks volumes!

TUBBER DERG;

or,

THE RED WELL.

TUBBER DERG;

OR,

THE RED WELL.

THE following story owes nothing to any colouring or invention of mine; it is unhappily a true one, and to me possesses a peculiar and melancholy interest, arising from my intimate knowledge of the man whose fate it holds up as a moral lesson to Irish landlords. I knew him well, and many a day and hour have I played about his knee, and ran, in my boyhood, round his path, when, as he said himself, the world was no trouble to him.

On the south side of a sloping tract of light ground, lively, warm, and productive, stood a white, moderate-sized farm-house, which, in consequence of its conspicuous situation, was a prominent, and, we may add, a graceful object in the landscape of which it formed a part. The spot whereon it stood was a swelling natural terrace, the soil of which was heavier and richer than that of the adjoining lands. On each side of the house stood a clump of old beeches, the only survivors of that species then remaining in

the country. These beeches extended behind the house in a kind of angle, with opening enough at their termination to form a vista, through which its white walls glistened with beautiful effect in the calm splendour of a summer evening. Above the mound on which it stood, rose two steep hills, overgrown with furze and fern, except on their tops, which were clothed with purple heath; they were also covered with patches of broom, and studded with grey rocks, which sometimes rose singly or in larger masses, pointed or rounded into curious and fantastic shapes. Exactly between these hills the sun went down during the month of June, and nothing could be in finer relief than the rocky and picturesque outlines of their sides, as crowned with thorns and clumps of wild ash, they appeared to overhang the valley whose green foliage was gilded by the sun-beams, which lit up the scene into radiant beauty. The bottom of this natural chasm, which opened against the deep crimson of the evening sky, was nearly upon a level with the house, and completely so with the beeches that surrounded it. Brightly did the sinking sun fall upon their tops, whilst the neat white house below, in their quiet shadow, sent up its wreath of smoke among their branches, itself an emblem of contentment, industry, and innocence. It was, in fact, a lovely situation; perhaps the brighter to me, that its remembrance is associated with days of happiness and freedom from the cares of a world, which, like a distant mountain, darkens as we approach it, and only exhausts us in struggling to climb its rugged and barren paths.

There was to the south-west of this house, another

litle hazel glen, that ended in a precipice formed by a single rock some thirty feet high, over which tumbled a crystal cascade into a basin worn in its hard bed below. From this basin the stream murmured away through the copse-wood, until it joined a larger rivulet that passed, with many a winding, through a fine extent of meadows adjoining it. Across the foot of this glen, and past the door of the house we have described, ran a bridle road, from time immemorial; on which, as the traveller ascended it towards the house, he appeared to track his way in blood, for a chalybeate *spa* arose at its head, oozing out of the earth, and spread itself in a crimson stream over the path in every spot whereon a foot mark could be made. From this circumstance it was called Tubber Derg, or the Red Well. In the meadow where the glen terminated, was another spring of delicious crystal; and clearly do I remember the ever-beaten path-way that led to it through the grass, and up the green field which rose in a gentle slope to the happy-looking house of Owen M'Carthy, for so was the man called, who resided under its peaceful roof.

I will not crave your pardon, gentle reader, for dwelling at such length upon a scene so dear to my heart as this, because I write not now so much for your gratification as my own. Many an eve of gentle May have I pulled the Maygowans which grew about that well, and over that smooth meadow. Often have I raised my voice to its shrillest pitch, that I might hear its echoes rebounding in the bottom of the green and still glen, where silence, so to speak,

was deepened by the continuous murmur of the cascade above; and when the cuckoo uttered her first note from among the hawthorns on its side, with what trembling anxiety did I, an urchin of some eight or nine years, look under my right foot for the white hair, whose charm was such, that by keeping it about me, the first female name I should hear was destined, I believed in my soul, to be that of my future wife. Sweet was the song of the thrush, and mellow the whistle of the blackbird, as they rose in the stillness of evening over the "birken shaws" and green dells of this secluded spot of rural beauty. Far, too, could the rich voice of Owen M'Carthy be heard along the hills and meadows, as, with a little chubby urchin at his knee, and another in his arms, he sat on a bench beside his own door, singing the 'Trougha" in his native Irish; whilst Kathleen his wife, with her two maids, each crooning a low song, sat before the door, milking the cows, whose sweet breath mingled its perfume with the warm breeze of evening.

Owen M'Carthy was descended from a long line of honest ancestors, whose names had never, within the memory of man, been tarnished by the commission of a mean or disreputable action. They were always a kind-hearted family, but stern and proud in the common intercourse of life. They believed themselves to be, and probably were, a branch of the Mac Carthy More stock; and, although only the possessors of a small farm, it was singular to observe the effect which this conviction produced upon their bearing and manners. To it might, perhaps, be attributed the high and stoical integrity for which they were

remarkable. This severity, however, was no proof that they wanted feeling, or were insensible to the misery and sorrows of others: in all the little cares and perplexities that chequered the peaceful neighbourhood in which they lived, they were ever the first to console, or, if necessary, to support a distressed neighbour with the means which God had placed in their possession; for, being industrious, they were seldom poor. Their words were few, but sincere, and generally promised less than the honest hearts that dictated them intended to perform. There is in some persons a hereditary feeling of just principle, the result neither of education, nor of a clear moral sense, but rather a kind of instinctive honesty which descends, like a constitutional bias, from father to son, pervading every member of the family. It is difficult to define this, or to assign its due position in the scale of human virtues. It exists in the midst of the grossest ignorance, and influences the character in the absence of better principles. Such was the impress which marked so strongly the family of which I speak. No one would ever think of imputing a dishonest act to the M'Carthys; nor would any person acquainted with them, hesitate for a moment to consider their word as good as the bond of another. I do not mean to say, however, that their motives of action were not higher than this instinctive honesty; far from it: but I say, that they possessed it in *addition* to a strong feeling of family pride, and a correct knowledge of their moral duties.

I can only take up Owen M'Carthy at that part of the past to which my memory extends. He was then

a tall, fine-looking young man; silent, but kind. One of the earliest events within my recollection is his wedding; after that the glimpse of his state and circumstances are imperfect; but as I grew up, they became more connected, and I am able to remember him the father of four children; an industrious inoffensive small farmer, beloved, respected, and honoured. No man could rise, be it ever so early, who would not find Owen up before him; no man could anticipate him in an early crop, and if a widow or a sick acquaintance were unable to get in their harvest, Owen was certain to collect the neighbours to assist them; to be the first there himself, with quiet benevolence, encouraging them to a zealous performance of the friendly task in which they were engaged.

It was, I believe, soon after his marriage, that the lease of the farm held by him expired. Until that time he had been able to live with perfect independence; but even the enormous rise of one pound per acre, though it deprived him in a great degree of his usual comforts, did not sink him below the bare necessaries of life. For some years after that he could still serve a deserving neighbour; and never was the hand of Owen M'Carthy held back from the wants and distresses of those whom he knew to be honest.

I remember once an occasion upon which a widow Murray applied to him for a loan of five pounds, to prevent her two cows from being auctioned for half a year's rent, of which she only wanted that sum. Owen sat at dinner with his family when she entered the house in tears, and, as well as her agitation of

mind permitted, gave him a detailed account of her embarrassment.

"The blessin' o' God be upon all here," said she, on entering.

"The double o' that to you, Rosha," replied Owen's wife: "won't you sit in an' be atin'?—here's a sate beside Nanny; come over, Rosha."

Owen only nodded to her, and continued to eat his dinner, as if he felt no interest in her distress. Rosha sat down at a distance, and with the corner of a red handkerchief to her eyes, shed tears in that bitterness of feeling which marks the helplessness of honest industry under the pressure of calamity.

"In the name o' goodness, Rosha," said Mrs. M'Carthy, "what ails you, asthore? Sure Jimmy—God spare him to you—wouldn't be dead?"

"Glory be to God! no, avourneen machree. Och, och! but it 'ud be the black sight, an' the black day, that 'ud see my brave boy, the staff of our support, an' the bread of our mouth, taken away from us!—No, no, Kathleen, dear, it's not that bad wid me yet. I hope we'll never live to see his manly head laid down before us. 'Twas his own manliness, indeed, brought it an him—backin the sack when he was bringin' home our last *meldhre* from the mill; for you see he should do it, the crathur, to show his strinth, an' the sack, when he got it an was too heavy for him, an' hurted the small of his back—for his bones, you see, are too young, an' hadn't time to fill up yet. No, avourneen. Glory be to God! he's gettin' betther wid me!"—and the poor creature's

eyes glistened with delight through her tears and the darkness of her affliction.

Without saying a word, Owen, when she finished the eulogium on her son, rose, and taking her forcibly by the shoulder, set her down at the table, on which a large pot-full of potatoes had been spread out, with a circle in the middle for a dish of rashers and eggs, into which dish every right hand of those about it was thrust, with a quickness that clearly illustrated the principle of competition as a stimulus to action.

"Spare your breath," said Owen, placing her rather roughly upon the seat, "an' take share of what's goin': when all's cleared off we'll hear you, but the sorra word till then."

"Musha, Owen," said the poor woman, "you're the same man still; sure we all know your ways; I'll strive, avourneen, to ate—I'll strive, asthore—to plase you, an' the Lord bless you an' yours, an' may you never be as I an' my fatherless childhre are this sorrowful day!"—and she accompanied her words by a flood of tears.

Owen, without evincing the slightest sympathy, withdrew himself from the table. Not a muscle of his faced was moved; but as the cat came about his feet at the time, he put his foot under her, and flung her as easily as possible to the lower end of the kitchen.

"Arrah, what harm did the crathur do," asked his wife, "that you'd kick her for, that way? an' why but you *ate out* your dinner?"

"*I'm* done," he replied, rather gruffly, "but that's no rason that Rosha, an' you, an' thim boys that has the work afore them, shouldn't finish your male's mate."

Poor Rosha thought that by his withdrawing he had already suspected the object of her visit, and of course concluded that her chance of succeeding was very slender.

The wife, who guessed what she wanted, as well as the nature of her suspicion, being herself as affectionate and obliging as Owen, reverted to the subject, in order to give her an opportunity of proceeding.

"Somethin' bitther, an' out o' the common coorse, is a throuble to you, Rosha," said she, "or you wouldn't be in the state you're in. The Lord look down on you this day, you poor crathur—widout the father of your childhre to stand up for you, an' your only other depindance laid on the broad of his back, all as one as a cripple: but no matther, Rosha; trust to Him that can be a husband to you, an' a father to your orphans—trust to Him, an' his blessed mother in heaven, this day, an' never fear but they'll *rise* up a frind for you. Musha, Owen ate your dinner as you ought to do, wid your capers! How can you take a spade in your hand upon that morsel?"

"Finish your own," said her husband, "an' never heed me; jist let me alone. Don't you see that if I wanted it, I'd ate it, an' what more would you have about it!"

"Well, acushla, it's your own loss, sure, of a sartinty. An', Rosha, whisper ahagur, what can

Owen or I do for you? Throth, it would be a bad day we'd see you at a *deshort* for a friend, for you never wor nothin' else nor a civil, oblagin' neighbour yourself; an' him that's gone before—the Lord make his bed in heaven this day—was as good a warrant as ever broke bread, to sarve a friend, if it was at the hour of midnight."

"Ah! when I had *him*," exclaimed the distracted widow, "I never had occasion to throuble aither friend or neighbour; but he's gone, an' now its otherwise wid me—glory be to God for all his mercies—a wurrah dheelish! Why, thin, since I must spake, an' has no other frind to go to—but somehow I doubt Owen looks dark upon me—sure I'd put my hand to a stamp, if my word wouldn't do for it, an' sign the blessed crass that saved us, for the payment of it; or I'd give it to him in oats, for I hear you want some, Owen—Phatie oats it is, an' a betther shouldhered or fuller-lookin' grain never went undher a harrow—indeed, it's it that's the beauty, all out, if it's good seed you want."

"What is it for, woman alive?" inquired Owen, as he kicked a three-legged stool out of his way.

"What is it for, is it? Och, Owen darlin', sure my two brave cows is lavin' me. Paddy Dannellan, the driver, is over wid me beyant, an' has them ready to set off wid. I reared them both, the two of them, wid my own hands; *Cheehoney*, that knows my voice, an' would come to me from the fardest corner o' the field, is goin', an' nothin' will we have—nothin' will my poor sick boy have—but the black wather, or the dhry salt; besides the butther of

them bein' lost to us for the rent, or a small taste of it, of an odd time, for poor Jimmy. Owen, next to God, I have no friend to depind upon but yourself!"

"Me!" said Owen, as if astonished. "Phoo, that's quare enough! Now do you think, Rosha,—hut, hut, woman alive! Come, boys, you're all done; out wid yees to your spades, an' finish that *meerin* before night. Me!—hut, tut!"

"I have it all but five pounds, Owen, an' for the sake of him that's in his grave—an' that, maybe, is able to put up his prayer for you"——

"An' what would you want *me* to do Rosha? Fitther for you to sit down an' finish your dinner, when it's before you. I'm goin' to get an' ould glove* that's somewhere about this chist, for I must weed out that bit of oats before night, wid a blessin'," and as he spoke, he passed into another room, as if he had altogether forgotten her solicitation, and in a few minutes returned.

"Owen, avick!—an' the blessin' of the fatherless be upon you, sure an' many a one o' them you have, any how, Owen!"

"Well, Rosha—well?"

"Och, och, Owen, it's low days wid me to be depindin' upon the sthranger? Little thim that reared me ever thought it 'ud come to this. You know I'm a dacent father's child, an' I have stooped to you, Owen M'Carthy—what I'd scorn to do to any other but yourself—poor an' friendless as I stand here before you. Let them take the cows, thin, from my childhre;

* In "hand-weeding," old gloves are used to prevent the hands from being injured by the thistles.

but the father of the fatherless will support thim an' me. Och, but it's well for the O'Donohoes that their landlord lives at home among themselves, for may the heavens look down on me, I wouldn't know where to find mine, if one sight of him 'ud save me an' my childhre from the grave! The Agent even he lives in Dublin, an' how could I lave my sick boy an' small *girshas* by themselves, to go a hundre miles, an' maybe not see him afther all. Little hopes I'd have from him, even if I did; he's paid for gatherin' in his rents; but it's well known he wants the touch of nathur for the sufferins of the poor, an' of them that's honest in their intintions."

"I'll go over wid you, Rosha, if that will be of any use," replied Owen, composedly; "come, I'll go an' spake to dirty Dannellan."

"The sorra blame I blame him, Owen," replied Rosha, "his bread's depindin' upon the likes of sich doins, an' he can't get over it; but a word from you, Owen, will save me, for who ever refused to take the word of a M'Carthy?"

When Owen and the widow arrived at the house of the latter, they found the situation of the bailiff laughable in the extreme. Her eldest son, who had been confined to his bed by a hurt received in his back, was up, and had got the unfortunate driver, who was rather old, wedged in between the dresser and the wall, where his cracked voice—for he was asthmatic—was raised to the highest pitch, calling for assistance. Beside him was a large tub half-filled with water, into which the little ones were emptying small jugs, carried at the top of their speed from a

TUBBER DERG.

Vol 2

Designed & Etched by W.H. Brooke F.S.A.

Oh Mudher - don't come in yet; till the Bayley drownded!

puddle before the door. In the mean time, Jemmy was tugging at the bailiff with all his strength—fortunately for that personage, it was but little—with the most sincere intention of inverting him into the tub which contained as much muddy water as would have been sufficient to make him a subject for the deliberation of a coroner and twelve honest men. Nothing could be more conscientiously attempted than the task which Jemmy had proposed to execute; every tug brought out his utmost strength, and when he failed in pulling down the bailiff, he compensated himself for his want of success, by cuffing his ribs, and peeling his shins by hard kicks; whilst from those open points which the driver's grapple with his man naturally exposed, were inflicted on him by the rejoicing urchins, numberless punches of tongs, potato-washers, and sticks whose points were from time to time hastily thrust into the coals, that they might more effectually either blind or disable him in some other manner.

As one of the little ones ran out to fill his jug, he spied his mother and Owen approaching, on which, with the empty vessel in his hand, he flew towards them, his little features distorted by glee and ferocity, wildly mixed up together.

"Oh, mudher, mudher—ha, ha, ha!—don't come in yet; don't come in, Owen, till Jimmy, an' huz, an' the Denisses, gets the Bailey drownded. We'll soon have the *bot** full; but Paddy an' Jack Denis have the eyes amost pucked out of him; an' Katty's

* A tub

takin' the hook from behind the *cuppel*, to get it about his neck."

Owen and the widow entered with all haste, precisely at the moment when Dannellan's head was dipped, for the first time, into the vessel.

"Is it goin' to murdher him yees are?" said Owen, as he seized Jemmy with a grasp that transferred him to the opposite end of the house; "hould back ye pack of young devils, an' let the man up. What did he come to do but his duty? I tell you, Jimmy, if you wor *at* yourself, an' in full strinth, that you'd have the man's blood on you where you stand, and would suffer as you ought to do for it."

"There let me," replied the lad, his eyes glowing, and his veins swollen with passion; "I don't care if I did. It would be no sin, an' no disgrace, to hang for the like of him; dacenter to do that, than stale a creel of turf, or a wisp of straw, 'tanny rate."

In the mean time, the bailiff had raised his head out of the water, and presented a visage which it was impossible to view with gravity. The widow's anxiety prevented her from seeing it in a ludicrous light; but Owen's severe face assumed a grave smile, as the man shook himself and attempted to comprehend the nature of his situation. The young urchins, who had fallen back at the appearance of Owen and the widow, now burst into a peal of mirth, in which, however, Jemmy, whose fiercer passions had been roused, did not join.

"Paddy Dannellan," said the widow, "I take the mother of heaven to witness, that it vexes my heart to see you get sich thratement in my place; an' I

wouldn't for the best cow in my byre that sich a *brieuliagh* happened. *Dher charp agus manim*,* Jimmy, but I'll make you suffer for drawin' down this upon my head, an' me had enough over it afore."

"I don't care," replied Jemmy; "whoever comes to take our property from us, an' us willin' to work, will suffer for it. Do you think I'd see thim crathurs at their dhry phatie, an' our cows standin' in a pound for no rason? No; high hangin' to me, but I'll split to the scull the first man that takes them; an' all I'm sorry for is, that it's not the vagabone Landlord himself that's near me. That's our thanks for payin' many a good pound in honesty an' dacency, to him an' his; lavin' us to a schamin' Agent, an' not even to that same, but to his undher-strappers, that's robbin' us on both sides between them. May hard fortune attind him, for a landlord! You may tell him this, Dannellan,—that his wisest plan is to keep clear of the counthry. Sure it's a gambler he is, they say, an' we must be harrished an' racked to support his villany: but wait a bit; maybe there's a good time comin', when we'll pay our money to thim that won't be too proud to hear our complaints wid their own ears, an' who won't turn us over to a divil's-limb of an Agent. *He* had need, any how, to get his coffin sooner nor he thinks. What signifies hangin' in a good cause?" said he, as the tears of keen indignation burst from his glowing eyes. "It's a dacent death, an' a happy death, when it's for the right," he added—for his mind was evidently fixed upon the contemplation of those means of redress,

* By my soul and body.

which the habits of the country, an' the prejudices of the people, present to them in the first moments of passion.

"It's well that Dannellan's one of ourselves," replied Owen, coolly, "otherwise, Jemmy, you said words that would lay you up by the heels. As for you, Dannellan, you must look over this. The boy's the son of dacent poor parents, an' it's a new thing for him to see the cows druv from the place. The poor fellow's vexed, too, that he has been so long laid up wid a sore back; an' so you see one thing or another has put him through other. Jimmy is warm-hearted, afther all, an' will be sorry for it when he cools, an' remimbers that *you* wor only doin' your duty."

"But what am I to do about the cows? Sure I can't go back widout either thim or the rint?" said Paddy, with a look of fear and trembling at Jemmy.

"The cows!" said another of the widow's sons, who then came in, "why, you dirty spalpeen of a rip, you may whistle on the wrong side o' your mouth for them. I *druv* them off of the estate; an' now take them, if you dar; it's conthrairy to law," said the urchin, "an' if you'd touch them, I'd make my mudher sarve you wid a *lattitat* or a *fiery-flashes*.

This was a triumph to the youngsters, who began to shake their little fists at him, and to exclaim in a chorus—"Ha, you dirty rip! wait till we get you out o' the house, an' if we don't put you from ever drivin'! Why but you work like another?—ha, you'll get it!"—and every little fist was shook in vengeance at him.

"Whisht wid yees," said Jemmy to the little ones: "let him alone, he got enough. There's the cows for you; an' keen may the curse o' the widow an' orphans light upon you, an' upon them that sent you, from first to last!—an' that's the *best* we wish you!"

"Paddy," said Owen to the bailiff, is there any one in the town below that will take the rint, an' give a resate for it? Do you think, man, that the neighbours of an honest, industrious woman 'ud see the cattle taken out of her byre for a thrifle? Hut, tut! no man alive—no sich thing! There's not a man in the parish wid manes to do it, would see them taken away to be canted, at only about a fourth part of their value. Hut, tut,—no!"

As the sterling fellow spoke, the cheeks of the widow were suffused with tears, and her son Jemmy's hollow eyes once more kindled, but with a far different expression from that which but a few minutes before flashed from them.

"Owen," said he, and utterance nearly failed him: "Owen, if *I* was well, it wouldn't be as it is wid us; but—no, indeed, it would not: but—may God bless you for this! Owen, never fear but you'll be paid: may God bless you, Owen!"

As he spoke the hand of his humble benefactor was warmly grasped in his. A tear fell upon it: for with one of those quick and fervid transitions of feeling so peculiar to the people, he now felt a strong, generous emotion of gratitude, mingled, perhaps, with a sense of wounded pride, on finding the poverty of their little family so openly exposed.

" Hut, tut, Jimmy, avick," said Owen, who understood his feelings, " phoo, man alive! hut—hem! Why, sure it's nothin', at all at all; any body would do it—only a bare five-an'-twenty shillins: [it was five pounds]—any neighbour—Mick Cassidy, Jack Moran, or Pether M'Cullagh would do it. Come Paddy, step out; the money's to the fore. Rosha put your cloak about you, and let us go down to the Agint or clerk, or whatsomever he is—sure that makes no maxim any how;—I suppose he has power to give a resate. Jemmy, go to bed again, you're pale, poor bouchal; and childhre, ye crathurs ye, the cows won't be taken from yees, this bout. Come, in the name of God, let us go, and see every thing rightified at once—hut, tut—come."

Many similar details of Owen M'Carthy's useful life could be given, in which he bore an equally benevolent and Christian part. Poor fellow! he was, ere long, brought low; but to the credit of our peasantry, much as is said about their barbarity, he was treated, when helpless, with gratitude, pity, and kindness.

Until the peace of 1814, Owen's regular and systematic industry enabled him to struggle successfully against a weighty rent and sudden depression in the price of agricultural produce; that is, he was able, by the unremitting toil of a man remarkable alike for an unbending spirit and a vigorous frame of body, to pay his rent with tolerable regularity. It is true, a change began to be visible in his personal appearance, in his farm, in the dress of his children, and in the economy of his household. Improvements which

adequate capital would have enabled him to effect, were left either altogether unattempted, or in an imperfect state resembling neglect, though, in reality, the result of poverty. His dress at mass, and in fairs and markets, had, by degrees, lost that air of comfort and warmth which bespeak the independent farmer. The evidences of embarrassment began to disclose themselves in many small points, inconsiderable, it is true, but not the less significant. His house, in the progress of his declining circumstances, ceased to be annually ornamented by a new coat of whitewash; it soon assumed a faded and yellowish hue, and sparkled not in the setting sun as in the days of Owen's prosperity. It had, in fact, a wasted, unthriving look like its master; the thatch became black and rotten upon its roof, the chimneys sloped to opposite points, the windows were less neat, and, ultimately, when broken, were patched with a couple of leaves from the children's blotted copy-books. His out-houses also began to fail; the neatness of his little farm-yard, and the cleanliness which marked so conspicuously the space fronting his dwelling-house, disappeared in the course of time. Filth began to accumulate where no filth had been; his garden was not now planted so early, nor with such taste and neatness as before; his crops were later, and less abundant; his haggards neither so full nor so trim as they were wont to be, nor his ditches and enclosures kept in such good repair. His cars, ploughs, and other farming implements, instead of being put under cover, were left exposed to the influence of wind and weather, where they soon became crazy and useless.

Such, however, were only the slighter symptoms of his bootless struggle against the general embarrassment into which the agricultural interests were, year after year, so unhappily sinking.

Had the tendency to general distress among the class to which he belonged become stationary, Owen would have continued by toil and incessant exertion to maintain his ground; but, unfortunately, there was no point at which the national depression could then stop. Year after year produced deeper, more extensive, and more complicated misery; and when he hoped that every succeeding season would bring an improvement in the market, he was destined to experience not merely a fresh disappointment, but an unexpected depreciation in the price of his corn, butter, and other disposable commodities.

When a nation is reduced to such a state, no eye but that of God himself can see the appalling wretchedness to which a year of disease and scarcity strikes down the poor and working classes.

Owen, after a long and noble contest for nearly three years, sank, at length, under the united calamities of disease and scarcity. The father of the family was laid low upon the bed of sickness, and those of his little ones who escaped it were almost consumed by famine. This two-fold shock sealed his ruin; his honest heart was crushed—his hardy frame shorn of its strength, and he to whom every neighbour fled as to a friend, now required friendship at a moment when the wide-spread poverty of the country rendered its assistance hopeless.

On rising from his bed of sickness, the prospect

before him required his utmost fortitude to bear. He was now wasted in energy both of mind and body, reduced to utter poverty, with a large family of children, too young to assist him, without means of retrieving his circumstances, his wife and himself gaunt skeletons, his farm neglected, his house wrecked, and his offices falling to ruin, yet every day bringing the half-year's term nearer! Oh, ye who riot on the miseries of such men—ye who roll round the easy circle of fashionable life, think upon this picture! Ye vile and heartless landlords, who see not, hear not, know not those to whose heart-breaking toil ye owe the only merit ye possess — that of rank in society — come and contemplate this virtuous man, as unfriended, unassisted, and uncheered by those who are bound by a strong moral duty to protect and aid him, he looks shuddering into the dark cheerless future! Is it to be wondered at that he, and such as he, should, in the misery of his despair, join the nightly meetings, be lured to associate himself with the incendiary, or seduced to grasp, in the stupid apathy of wretchedness, the weapon of the murderer? By neglecting the people, by draining them, with merciless rapacity, of the means of life; by goading them on under a cruel system of rack rents, ye become not their natural benefactors, but curses and scourges, nearly as much in reality as ye are in their opinion.

When Owen rose, he was driven by hunger, direct and immediate, to sell his best cow; and having purchased some oatmeal at an enormous price, from a well known devotee in the parish, who hoarded up this commodity for a "dear summer," he laid his plans

for the future, with as much judgment as any man could display. One morning after breakfast he addressed his wife as follows:—

"Kathleen, mavourneen, I want to consult wid you about what we ought to do; things are low wid us, asthore; and except our heavenly Father puts it into the heart of them I'm goin' to mention, I don't know what we'll do, nor what 'ill become of these poor crathurs that's naked and hungry about us. God pity them, they don't know—and maybe that same's some comfort—the hardships that's before them. Poor crathurs, see how quiet and sorrowful they sit about their little play, passin' the time for themselves as well as they can! Alley, acushla machree, come over to me. Your hair is bright and fair, Alley, and curls so purtily that the finest lady in the land might envy it, but, acushla, your colour's gone, your little hands are wasted away, too; that sickness was hard and sore upon you, *a colleen machree*, and he that 'ud spend his heart's blood for you, darlin', can do nothin' to help you!"

He looked at the child as he spoke, and a slight motion in the muscles of his face was barely perceptible, but it passed away; and, after kissing her, he proceeded:—

"Ay, ye crathurs—you and I, Kathleen, could earn our bread for ourselves yet, but these can't do it. This last stroke, darlin', has laid us at the door of both poverty and sickness, but blessed be the mother of heaven for it, they are all left wid us; and sure that's a blessin' we've to be thankful for—glory be to God!"

"Ay, poor things, it's well to have them spared, Owen dear; sure I'd rather a thousand times beg from door to door, and have my childher to look at, than be in comfort widout them."

"Beg:—that 'ud go hard wid me, Kathleen. I'd work—I'd live on next to nothing all the year round—but to see the crathurs that wor dacently bred up brought to that, I couldn't bear it, Kathleen—t'would break the heart widin in me. Poor as they are, they have the blood of kings in their veins; and, besides, to see a M'Carthy beggin' his bread in the counthry where his name was once great—The M'Carthy More, that was their title—No, acushla; I love them as I do the blood in my own veins; but I'd rather see them in the arms of God in heaven, laid down dacently, with their little sorrowful faces washed, and their little bodies stretched out purtily before my eyes—I would—in the grave-yard there beyant, where all belonging to me lie, than have it cast up to them, or have it said, that ever a M'Carthy was seen beggin' on the high-way."

"But, Owen, can you strike out no plan for us that 'ud put us in the way of comin' round agin? These poor ones, if we could hould out for two or three year, would soon be able to help us."

"They would—they would. I'm thinkin' this day or two of a plan: but I'm doubtful whether it 'ud come to any thing."

"What is it acushla? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, any way."

"I'm goin' to go to Dublin. I'm tould that the

landlord's come home from France and that he's there now; and if I did'nt see him, sure I could see the Agent. Now, Kathleen, my intintion 'ud be to lay our case before the Head Landlord himself, in hopes he might hould back his hand, and spare us for a while. If I had a line from the agent, or a scrape of a pen that I could show at home to some of the nabours, who knows but I could borry what 'ud set us up agin! I think many of them 'ud be sorry to see me turned out; eh, Kathleen?"

The Irish are an imaginative people; indeed too much so, for either their individual or national happiness. And it is this and superstition, which also depends much upon imagination, that makes them so easily influenced by those extravagant dreams that are held out to them by persons who understand their character.

When Kathleen heard the plan on which Owen founded his expectations of assistance, her dark melancholy eye flashed with a portion of its former fire; a transient vivacity lit up her sickly features, and she turned a smile of hope and affection upon her children, then upon Owen.

"Arrah, thin, who knows, indeed!—who knows but he might do something for us? And maybe we might be as well as ever yet! May the Lord put it into his heart, this day! I declare, ay!—maybe it was God put it into *your* heart, Owen!"

"I'll set off," replied her husband, who was a man of decision—"I'll set off on other morrow mornin'; and as nobody knows any thing about it, so let there

not be a word said upon the subject, good or bad. If I have success, well and good; but if not, why nobody need be the wiser."

The heart-broken wife evinced, for the remainder of the day, a lightness of spirits which she had not felt for many a month before. Even Owen was less depressed than usual, and employed himself in making such arrangements as he knew would occasion his family to feel the inconvenience of his absence less acutely. But as the hour of his departure drew nigh, a sorrowful feeling of affection rising into greater strength and tenderness, threw a melancholy gloom around his hearth. According to their simple view of distance, a journey to Dublin was a serious undertaking, and to them it was such. Owen was in weak health, just risen out of illness, and what was more trying than any other consideration was, that since their marriage they had never been separated before.

On the morning of his departure, he was up before daybreak, and so were his wife and children, for the latter had heard the conversation already detailed between them, and, with their simple-minded parents, enjoyed the gleam of hope which it presented; but this soon changed—when he was preparing to go, an indefinite sense of fear, and a more vivid clinging of affection marked their feelings. He himself partook of this, and was silent, depressed, and less ardent than when the speculation first presented itself to his mind. His resolution, however, was taken, and should he fail, no blame at a future time could be attached to himself. It was the last effort; and to

neglect it, he thought, would have been to neglect his duty. When breakfast was ready, they all sat down in silence; the hour was yet early, and a rushlight was placed in a wooden candlestick that stood beside them to afford light. There was something solemn and touching in the group as they sat in dim relief, every face marked by the traces of sickness, want, sorrow, and affection. The father attempted to eat but he could not; Kathleen sat at the meal but could taste nothing; the children eat, for hunger at the moment was predominant over every other sensation. At length it was over, and Owen rose to depart; he stood for a minute on the floor, and seemed to take a survey of his cold, cheerless house, and then of his family; he cleared his throat several times, but did not speak.

"Kathleen," said he, at length, "in the name of God I'll 'go; and may his blessin' be about you, asthore machree, and guard you and these darlins till I come back to yees."

Kathleen's faithful heart could bear no more; she laid herself on his bosom—clung to his neck, and, as the parting kiss was given, she wept aloud, and Owen's tears fell silently down his worn cheeks. The children crowded about them in loud wailings, and the grief of this virtuous and afflicted family was of that profound description, which is ever the companion, in such scenes, of pure and genuine love.

"Owen!" she exclaimed—"Owen, *a-suilish mahuil agus machree!** I doubt we wor wrong in thinkin' of this journey. How can you, mavourneen,

* Light of my eyes and of my heart.

walk all the way to Dublin, and you so worn and weakly wid that sickness, and the bad feedin' both before and since? Och, give it up, achree, and stay wid us—let what will happen. You're not able for sich a journey, indeed you're not. Stay wid me and the childher, Owen; sure we'd be so lonesome widout you—will you, agrah? and the Lord will do for us some other way, maybe."

Owen pressed his faithful wife to his heart, and kissed her chaste lips with a tenderness which the heartless votaries of fashionable life can never know.

"Kathleen, asthore," he replied, in those terms of endearment which flow so tenderly through the language of the people—"sure whin I remimber your fair young face—your yellow hair, and the light that was in your eyes, acushla machree—but that's gone long ago—och, don't ax me to stop. Isn't your lightsome laugh, whin you wor young, in my ears? and your step that 'ud not bend the flower of the field—Kathleen, I can't, indeed I can't, bear to think of what you wor, nor of what you are now, when in the coorse of age and natur, but a small change ought to be upon you! Sure I ought to make every struggle to take you and these sorrowful crathurs out of the state you're in."

The children flocked about them, and joined their entreaties to those of their mother. "Father, don't lave us—we'll be lonesome if you go; and if my mother 'ud get unwell, who'd be to take care of her? Father, don't lave your own 'weeny crathurs,' (a pet name he had for them)—maybe the meal 'ud be

eat out before you'd come back; or may be something 'ud happen you in that strange place."

"Indeed there's truth in what they say, Owen," said the wife; "do be said by your own Kathleen for this time, and don't take sich a long journey upon you. Afther all, maybe, you wouldn't see him—sure the nabours will help us, if you could only humble yourself to ax them!"

"'Kathleen," said Owen, "when this is past you'll be glad I went—indeed you will; sure it's only the tindher feelin' of your hearts, darlins. Who knows what the landlord may do when I see himself, and show him these resates—every penny paid him by our own family. Let me go, acushla; it *does* cut me to the heart to lave yees the way yees are in, even for a while; but it's far worse to see your poor wasted faces, widout havin' it in my power to do any thing for yees."

He then kissed them again, one by one; and pressing the affectionate partner of his sorrows to his breaking heart, he bade God bless them, and set out in the twilight of a bitter March morning. He had not gone many yards from the door when little Alley ran after him in tears; he felt her hand upon the skirts of his coat, which she plucked with a smile of affection that neither tears nor sorrow could repress. "Father, kiss *me* again," said she. He stooped down and kissed her tenderly. The child then ascended a green ditch, and Owen, as he looked back, saw her standing upon it; her fair tresses were tossed by the blast about her face, as with straining eyes

she watched him receding from her view. Kathleen and the other children stood at the door, and also with deep sorrow watched his form, until the angle of the bridle road rendered him no longer visible; after which they returned slowly to the fire and wept bitterly.

We believe no men are capable of bearing greater toil or privation than the Irish. Owen's *viaticum* was only two or three oaten cakes tied in a little handkerchief, and a few shillings in silver to pay for his bed. With this small stock of food and money, an oaken stick in his hand, and his wife's kerchief tied about his waist, he undertook a journey of one hundred and eighty miles in quest of a landlord who, so far from being acquainted with the distresses of his tenantry, scarcely knew even their names, and not one of them in person.

Our scene now changes to the metropolis. One evening, about half past six o'clock, a toil-worn man turned his steps to a splendid mansion in Mountjoy-square; his appearance was drooping, fatigued, and feeble. As he went along, he examined the numbers on the respective doors, until he reached *one*—before which he stopped for a moment; he then stepped out upon the street, and looked through the windows, as if willing to ascertain whether there was any chance of his object being attained. Whilst in this situation a carriage rolled rapidly up, and stopped with a sudden check that nearly threw the horses on their haunches. In an instant the thundering knock of the servant intimated the arrival of some person of rank; the hall door was opened, and Owen, availing

himself of that opportunity, entered the hall. Such a visitor, however, was too remarkable to escape notice. The hand of the menial was rudely placed against his breast; and as the usual impertinent interrogatories were put to him, the pampered ruffian kept pushing him back, until the afflicted man stood upon the upper step leading to the door.

"For the sake of God, let me spake but two words to him. I'm his tenant; and I know he's too much of a jintleman to turn away a man that has lived upon his honor's estate—father and son—for upwards of two hundre years. My name's Owen—"

"You can't see him, my good fellow, at this hour. Go to Mr. M——, his Agent: we have company to dinner. He never speaks to a tenant on business; his Agent manages all that. Please, leave the way, here's more company."

As he uttered the last word, he pushed Owen back, who, forgetting that the stairs were behind him, fell —received a severe cut, and was so completely stunned, that he lay senseless and bleeding. Another carriage drove up, as the fellow, now much alarmed, attempted to raise him from the steps and, by order of the gentleman who came in it, he was brought into the hall. The circumstance now made some noise. It was whispered about, that one of Mr. ——'s tenants, a drunken fellow from the country, wanted to break in forcibly to see him; but then it was also asserted, that his scull was broken, and that he lay dead in the hall. Several of the gentlemen above stairs, on hearing that a man had been killed, immediately assembled about him, and by the means

of restoratives, he soon recovered, though the blood streamed copiously from the wound in the back of his head.

"Who are you, my good man?" said Mr. S.

Owen looked about him rather vacantly, but soon collected himself, and replied in a mournful and touching tone of voice—"I'm one of your honor's tenants from Tubber Derg; my name is Owen M'Carthy, your honor—that is, if you be Mr. ——."

"And pray what brought you to town, M'Carthy?"

"I wanted to make an humble appale to your honor's feelins, in regard of my bit of farm. I and my poor family, your honor, have been broken down by hard times and the sickness of the sason — God knows how *they* are."

"If you wish to speak to me about that, my good man, you must know I refer all these matters to my Agent—go to him; he knows them best; and whatever is right and proper to be done for you, he will do it. Sinclair, give him a crown, and send him to the —— Dispensary to get his head dressed. I say, Carthy, go to my Agent; he knows whether your claim is just or not, and will attend to it accordingly."

"Plase your honor, I've been wid him, and he says he can do nothin' whatsomever for me. I went two or three times, and couldn't see him, he was so busy; and when I did get a word or two wid him, he tould me there was more offered for my land than I'm payin'; and that if I did not pay up, I must be put out —God help me!"

"But I tell you, Carthy, I never interfere between him and my tenants."

"Och, indeed, and it would be well both for your honor's tenants and yourself, if you did, Sir. Your honor ought to know, Sir, more about us, and how we're thrated. I'm an honest man, Sir, and I tell you so for your good."

"And pray, Sir," said the Agent, stepping forward, for he had arrived a few minutes before, and heard the last observation of M'Carthy—"pray, how are they treated, you that know so well, and are so honest a man?—As for honesty, you might have referred to me for that, I think," he added.

"Mr. M——," said Owen, "we're thrated very badly. Sir, you needn't look at me, for I'm not afeerd to spake the thruth; no bullyin', Sir, will make me say any thing in your favour that you don't desarve. You've broken the half of them by severity: you've turned the tenants aginst yourself and his honor here; and I tell you now, though you're to the fore, that, in the coorse of a short time, there'll be bad work upon the estate, except his honor, here, looks into his own affairs, and hears the complaints of the people; look at these resates, yer honor, they'll show you, Sir——."

"Carthy, I can hear no such language against the gentleman to whom I intrust the management of my property; of course I refer the matter solely to him—I can do nothing in it."

"Kathleen, avourneen!" exclaimed the poor man, as he looked up despairingly to heaven—"and ye,

poor darlins of my heart! Is this the news I'm to have for yees whin I go home? As you hope for mercy, Sir, don't turn away your ear from my petition, that I'd humbly make to *yourself*. Cowld, and hunger, and hardship are at home before me, yer honor. If you'd be plased to look at these resates, you'd see that I always paid my rent, and 'twas sickness and the hard times——."

"And your own honesty, industry, and good conduct," said the Agent, giving a dark and malignant sneer at him. Carthy, it shall be my business to see that you do not spread a bad spirit through the tenantry much longer. Sir, you have heard the fellow's admission. It is an implied threat that he will give us much serious trouble. There is not such another incendiary on your property—not one, upon my honour."

"Sir," said a servant, "dinner is on the table."

"Sinclair," said his landlord, "give him another crown, and tell him to trouble me no more." Saying which, he and the Agent went up to the drawing-room, and, in a moment, Owen saw a large party sweep down stairs, full of glee and vivacity, by whom both himself and his distresses were as completely forgotten as if they had never existed.

He now slowly departed, and knew not whether the house steward had given him money or not until he felt it in his hand. A cold, sorrowful weight lay upon his heart; the din of the town deadened his affliction into a stupor; but an overwhelming sense of his disappointment, and a conviction of the Agent's

diabolical falsehood, entered, like barbed arrows, into his heart.

On leaving the steps, he looked up to heaven in the distraction of his agonizing thoughts; the clouds were black and lowering; the wind stormy, and as it carried them on its dark wing along the sky, he wished, if it were the will of God, that his head lay in the quiet grave-yard where the ashes of his forefathers reposed in peace. But he again remembered his Kathleen and their children, and the large tears of anguish, deep and bitter, rolled slowly down his cheeks.

We will not trace him into an hospital, whither the wound on his head occasioned him to be sent, but simply state, that, on the second week after this, a man with his head bound in a handkerchief, lame, bent, and evidently labouring under severe illness or great affliction, might be seen toiling slowly up the little hill that commanded a view of Tubber Derg. On reaching the top, he sat down to rest for a few minutes, but his eye was eagerly turned to the house which contained all that was dear to him on this earth. The sun was setting, and shone with half his disk visible, in that dim and cheerless splendour which produces almost in every temperament a feeling of melancholy. His house which, in happier days, formed so beautiful and conspicuous an object in the view, was now, from the darkness of its walls, scarcely discernible. The position of the sun, too, rendered it more difficult to be seen, and Owen, for it was he, shaded his eyes with his hand, to survey it

more distinctly. Many a harrowing thought and remembrance passed through his mind, as his eye traced its dim outline in the fading light. He had done his duty—he had gone to the fountain head, with a hope that his simple story of affliction might be heard; but all was fruitless: the only gleam of hope that opened upon their misery had now passed into darkness and despair for ever. He pressed his aching forehead with distraction as he thought of this; then clasped his hands bitterly, and groaned aloud.

At length he rose, and proceeded with great difficulty, for the short rest had stiffened his weak and fatigued joints. As he approached home his heart sank; and as he ascended the blood-red stream which covered the bridle way that led to his house, what with fatigue and affliction, his agitation weakened him so much that he stopped, and leaned on his staff several times, that he might take breath.

"It's too dark may be, for them to see me, or poor Kathleen would send the darlins to give me the *she dha veha.** Kathleen, avourneen machree, how my heart beats wid long to see you, asthore, and to see the weeny crathurs—glory be to Him that has left *them* to me—praise and glory to His name!"

He was now within a few perches of the door; but a sudden misgiving shot across his heart when he saw it shut, and no appearance of smoke from the chimney, nor of stir or life about the house. He advanced—

"Mother of glory, what's this!—but, wait, let me rap agin. Kathleen—Kathleen—are you widin,

* The welcome.

avourneen? Owen—Alley—arn't yees widin, childhre? Alley, sure I'm come back to yees all!" and he rapped more loudly than before. A dark breeze swept through the bushes as he spoke, but no voice nor sound proceeded from the house; all was still as death within. "Alley!" he called once more to his little favourite; "I'm come home wid something for you, asthore; I did'nt forget *you*, alanna—I brought it from Dublin all the way—Alley!" but the gloomy murmur of the blast was the only reply.

Perhaps the most intense of all that he knew as misery was that which he then felt; but this state of suspense was soon terminated by the appearance of a neighbour who was passing.

"Why, thin, Owen, but yer welcome home agin, my poor fellow; and I'm sorry that I havn't betther news for you, and so are all of us."

He whom he addressed had almost lost the power of speech:—

"Frank," said he, and he wrung his hand. "What—what? was death among them? for the sake of heaven spake!"

The severe pressure which he received in return ran like a shock of paralysis to his heart. "Owen, you must be a man; every one pities yees, and may the Almighty pity and support yees! She is, indeed, Owen, gone; the weeny fair-haired child, your favourite Alley, is gone. Yestherday she was berrid; and dacently the nabours attinded the place, and sent in, as far as they had it, both mate and dhrink to Kathleen and the other ones. Now, Owen, you've heard it; trust in God, an' be a man."

A deep and convulsive throe shook him to the heart. "Gone!—the fair-haired one!—Alley!—Alley!—the pride of both our hearts; the sweet, the quiet, and the sorrowful child, that seldom played wid the rest, but kept wid mys—! Oh, my darlin', my darlin'! gone from my eyes for ever! God of glory! won't you support me this night of sorrow and misery!" With a sudden yet profound sense of humility, he dropped on his knees, at the threshold, and, as the tears rolled down his convulsed cheeks, exclaimed, in a burst of sublime piety, not at all uncommon among our peasantry—"I thank you, O my God! I thank you, an' I put myself an' my weeny ones, my *pastchee boght*, into your hands. I thank you, O God, for what has happened! Keep me up and support me—och, I want it! You loved the weeny one, and you took her; she was the light of my eyes and the pulse of my broken heart; but you took her, blessed Father of heaven! an' we can't be angry wid you for so doin'! Still if you had spared *her*—if—if—oh, blessed Father, my heart was *in* the *very* one you took—but I thank you, O God! May she rest in pace, now and for ever, Amin!"

He then rose up, and slowly wiping the tears from his eyes, departed.

"Let me hould your arm, Frank, dear," said he. "I'm weak and tired wid a long journey. Och, an' can it be that she's gone—the fair-haired colleen! When I was lavin' home, an' had kissed them all—'twas the first time we ever parted, Kathleen and I, since our marriage—the blessed child came over an' held up her mouth, sayin', 'Kiss *me* agin, father;'

an' this was afther herself an' all of them had kissed me afore. But och! oh! Blessed Mother, Frank, where's my Kathleen and the rest?—and why are they out of their own poor place?"

"Owen, I tould you a while agone, that you must be a man. I gave you the worst news first, an' what's to come doesn't signify much. It was too dear; for if any man could live upon it you could—you have neither house nor home, Owen, nor land. An ordher came from the Agint—your last cow was taken, so was all you had in the world—hem—barrin' a thrifle. No, bad manners to it—no, you're not widout a home, any way—the family's in my barn, brave and comfortable, compared to what your own house was, that let in the wather through the roof like a sieve; and while the same barn's to the fore, never say you want a home."

"God bless you, Frank, for that goodness to them and me. If you're not rewarded for it here, you will in a betther place. Och, I long to see Kathleen and the childher! But I'm fairly broken down, Frank, and hardly able to mark the ground; and indeed, no wondher, if you knew but all, still let God's will be done! Poor Kathleen, I must bear up afore her, or she'll break her heart, for I know how she loved the goolden-haired darlin' that's gone from us. Och, and how did she go, Frank, for I left her betther?"

"Why, the poor girsha took a relapse, and wasn't strong enough to bear up aginst the last attack; but it's one comfort that you know she's happy."

Owen stood for a moment, and looking solemnly

in his neighbour's face, exclaimed, in a deep and exhausted voice—" Frank !"

" What are you goin' to say, Owen ?"

" The heart widin me's broke—broke !"

The large tears rolled down his weather-beaten cheeks, and he proceeded in silence to the house of his friend. There was, however, a feeling of sorrow in his words and manner which Frank could not withstand. He grasped Owen's hand, and, in a low and broken voice, simply said—" Keep your spirits up—keep them up."

When they came to the barn in which his helpless family had taken up their temporary residence, Owen stood for a moment to collect himself; but he was nervous, and trembled with repressed emotion. They then entered; and Kathleen, on seeing her beloved and affectionate husband, threw herself on his bosom, and for some time felt neither joy nor sorrow—she had swooned. The poor man embraced her with a tenderness at once mournful and deep. The children, on seeing their father safely returned, forgot their recent grief, and clung about him with gladness and delight. In the mean time Kathleen recovered, and Owen for many minutes could not check the loud and clamorous grief—now revived by the presence of her husband—with which the heart-broken and emaciated mother deplored her departed child; and Owen himself on once more looking among the little ones—on seeing her little frock hanging up, and her stool vacant by the fire—on missing her voice and her blue laughing eyes, and remembering the affectionate manner in which, as with a presentiment

of death, she held up her little mouth and offered him the last kiss — he slowly pulled the toys and cakes he had purchased for her out of his pocket, surveyed them for a moment, and then putting his hands on his face, bent his head upon his bosom, and wept with the vehement outpouring of a father's sorrow.

The reader perceives that he was a meek man; that his passions were not dark nor violent; he bore no revenge to those who neglected or injured him, and in this he differed from too many of his countrymen. No; his spirit was broken down with sorrow, and had not room for the fiercer and more destructive passions. His case excited general pity. Whatever his neighbours could do to soothe him and alleviate his affliction was done. His farm was not taken; for fearful threats were held out against those who might venture to occupy it. In these threats he had nothing to do; on the contrary, he strongly deprecated them. Their existence, however, was deemed by the Agent sufficient to justify him in his callous and malignant severity towards him.

We did not write this story for effect. Our object was to relate facts that occurred. In Ireland there is much blame justly attached to landlords for their neglect and severity, in such depressed times, towards their tenants. There is also much that is not only indefensible but atrocious on the part of the tenants. But can the landed proprietors of Ireland plead ignorance or want of education for their neglect and rapacity, whilst the crimes of the tenants, on the contrary, may in general be ascribed to both? He

who lives, as perhaps his forefathers have done, upon any man's property, and fails, from unavoidable calamity, has as just and clear a right to assistance from the landlord, as if the amount of that aid were a bonded debt. Common policy, common sense, and common justice, should induce the Irish landlords to lower their rents according to the market for agricultural produce, otherwise poverty, famine, crime, and vague political speculations, founded upon idle hopes of a general transfer of property, will spread over and convulse the kingdom. Any man who looks into our poverty, may see that our landlords ought to reduce their rents to a standard suitable to the times, and to the ability of the tenant.

But to return. Owen, for another year, struggled on for his family, without success; his firm spirit *was* broken; employment he could not get, and even had it been regular, he would have found it impracticable to support his helpless wife and children by his labour. The next year unhappily was also one of sickness and of want; the country was not only a wide waste of poverty, but overspread with typhus fever. One Saturday night he and the family found themselves without food; they had not tasted a morsel for twenty-four hours. There were murmurings and tears, and finally, a low conversation among them, as if they held a conference upon some subject which filled them with both grief and satisfaction. In this alternation of feeling did they pass the time until the sharp gnawing of hunger was relieved by sleep. A keen December wind blew with a bitter blast on the following morning; the rain was borne along upon

it with violence, and the cold was chill and piercing. Owen, his wife, and their six children, issued at day-break out of the barn in which, ever since their removal from Tubber Derg, they had lived until then; their miserable fragments of bed clothes were tied in a bundle to keep them dry; their pace was slow, need we say sorrowful; all were in tears. Owen and Kathleen went first, with a child upon the back, and another in the hand, of each. Their route lay by their former dwelling, the door of which was open, for it had not been inhabited. On passing it they stood a moment; then with a simultaneous impulse both approached—entered—and took one last look of a spot to which their hearts clung with enduring attachment. They then returned; and as they passed, Owen put forth his hand, picked a few small pebbles out of the wall, and put them in his pocket.

"Farewell!" said he, "and may the blessin' of God rest upon you! We now lave you for ever! We're goin' at last to beg our bread through the world wide, where none will know of the happy days we passed widin your walls! We *must* lave you; but glory be to the Almighty, we are goin' wid a clear conscience; we took no revenge into our own hands, but left every thing to God above us. We are poor, but there is neither blood, nor murder, nor dishonesty upon our heads. Don't cry, Kathleen—don't cry, childher; there is still a good God above, who can and may do something for us *yet*, glory be to his name!"

He then passed on with his family, which, including himself, made, in all, eight paupers, being

an additional burden upon the country, which might easily have been avoided. His land was about two years waste, and when it was ultimately taken, the house was a ruin, and the money allowed by the landlord for building a new one, together with the loss of two years' rent, would, if humanely directed, have enabled Owen M'Carthy to remain a solvent tenant.

When an Irish peasant is reduced to pauperism, he seldom commences the melancholy task of soliciting alms in his native place. The trial is always a severe one, and he is anxious to hide his shame and misery from the eyes of those who know him. This is one reason why some system of poor laws should be introduced into the country. Paupers of this description become a burden upon strangers, whilst those who are capable of entering with friendly sympathy into their misfortunes have no opportunity of assisting them. Indeed this shame of seeking alms from those who have known the mendicant in better days, is a proof that the absence of poor laws takes away from the poorer classes one of the strongest incitements to industry; for instance, if every pauper in Ireland were confined to his own parish, and compelled to beg from his acquaintances, the sense of shame alone would, by stirring them up to greater industry, reduce the number of mendicants one half. There is a strong spirit of family pride in Ireland, which would be sufficient to make many poor, of both sexes, exert themselves to the uttermost rather than cast a stain upon their name, or bring a blush to the face of their relations. But now it is not so;

the mendicant sets out to beg, and in every instance commences his new mode of life in some distant part of the country, where his name and family are not known.

Indeed it is astonishing how any man can, for a moment, hesitate to form his opinion upon the subject of poor laws. The English and Scotch gentry know something about the middle and lower classes of their respective countries, and, of course they have a fixed system of provision for the poor in each. The ignorance of the Irish gentry, upon almost every subject connected with the real good of the people, is only in keeping with their ignorance of the people themselves. It is to be feared, however, that their disinclination to introduce poor laws arises less from actual ignorance, than from an illiberal selfishness. The facts of the case are these:—In Ireland the whole support of the inconceivable multitude of paupers, who swarm like locusts over the surface of the country, rests upon the middle and lower classes, or rather upon the latter, for there is scarcely such a thing in this unhappy country as a middle class. In not one out of a thousand instances do the gentry contribute to the mendicant poor. In the first place, a vast proportion of our landlords are absentees, who squander upon their own pleasures or vices, in the theatres, saloons, or gaming-houses of France, or in the softer profligacies of Italy, that which ought to return in some shape to stand in the place of duties so shamefully neglected. These persons contribute nothing to the poor, except the various evils which their absence entails upon them.

On the other hand, the *resident* gentry never, in any case, assist a beggar, even in the remote parts of the country, where there are no Mendicity Institutions. Nor do the beggars ever think of applying to them. They know that his Honour's dogs would be slipped at them; or that the whip might be laid, perhaps, to the shoulders of a broken-hearted father, with his brood of helpless children wanting food; perhaps, upon the emaciated person of a miserable widow, who begs for her orphans, only because the hands that supported, and would have defended both her and them, are mouldered into dust.

Upon the middle and lower classes, therefore, comes *directly* the heavy burden of supporting the great mass of pauperism that presses upon Ireland. It is certain that the Irish landlords know this, and that they are reluctant to see any law enacted which might make the performance of their duties to the poor compulsory. This, indeed, is natural in men who have so inhumanly neglected them.

But what must the state of a country be where those who are on the way to pauperism themselves are exclusively burdened with the support of the vagrant poor? It is like putting additional weight on a man already sinking under the burden he bears. The landlords suppose, that because the maintenance of the idle who are able, and of the aged and infirm who are not able to work, comes upon the renters of land, they themselves are exempted from their support. This, if true, is as bitter a stigma upon their humanity as upon their sense of justice: but it is not true. Though the cost of supporting such an

incredible number of the idle and helpless does, in the first place, fall upon the tenant, yet, by diminishing his means, and by often compelling him to purchase, towards the end of the season, a portion of food equal to that which he has given away in charity, it certainly becomes ultimately a clear deduction from the landlord's rent. In either case it is a deduction, but in the latter it is often doubly so; inasmuch as the poor tenants must frequently pay, at the close of a season, double, perhaps treble, the price which provision brought at the beginning of it.

Any person conversant with the Irish people must frequently have heard such dialogues as the following, during the application of a beggar for alms:—

Mendicant.—"We're axin your charity, for God's sake!"

Poor Tenant.—"Whether for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it's not for you widin the four corners of the house. It 'ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin' the whole year;* we wouldn't have to be buyin' for ourselves at three prices. Why don't you go up to the Big House? *They're* rich and can afford it."

Mendicant, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—"Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me, an' the childhre here, to be torn to pieces wid the dogs? or lashed wid a whip by one o' the sarwints? No, no, avourneen! (with a hopeless shake of the head.) That 'ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin'."

Poor Tenant—"Then, indeed, we haven't it

to help you, now, poor man. We're buyin' ourselves."

Mendicant—" Thin, throth, that's lucky, so it is! I've as purty a grain o' male here, as you'd wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o' tobaccy, along wid a pair o' new bades an' a scapular for myself. I'm suspicious that there's about a stone ov it altogether. You can have it anundher the market price, for I'm frettin' at not havin' the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an' the childhre a bit an' sup some way else—glory to his name!—besides a lock o' praties in the corner o' the bag here, that'll do us for this day, any way."

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

This, certainly, is not a state of things which should be permitted to exist. Every man ought to be compelled to support the poor of his native parish according to his means. It is an indelible disgrace to the legislature so long to have neglected the paupers of Ireland. Is it to be thought of with common patience that a person rolling in wealth shall feed upon his turtle, his venison, and his costly luxuries of every description, for which he will not scruple to pay the highest price—that this heartless and selfish man, whether he reside at home or abroad, shall thus unconscionably pamper himself with viands purchased

by the toil of the people, and yet not contribute to their miseries, when poverty, sickness, or age, throws them upon the scanty support of casual charity!

Shall this man be permitted to batten in luxury in a foreign land, or, at home, to whip our paupers from his carriage, or hunt them, like beasts of prey, from his grounds, whilst the lower classes—the gradually decaying poor—are compelled to groan under the burden of their support in addition to their other burdens? Surely it is not a question which admits of argument. This subject has been darkened and made difficult by fine spun and inintelligible theories, when the only knowledge necessary to understand it may be gained by spending a few weeks in some poor village in the interior of the country. As for Parliamentary Committees upon this or any other subject, they are, with reverence be it spoken, thoroughly contemptible. They will summon and examine witnesses who, for the most part, know little about the habits or distresses of the poor; public money will be wasted in defraying their expenses and in printing reports; resolutions will be passed; something will be said about it in the House of Commons; and, in a few weeks, after resolving and re-resolving, it is as little thought of, as if it had never been the subject of investigation. In the mean time the evil proceeds—becomes more inveterate—eats into the already declining prosperity of the country—whilst those who suffer under it have the consolation of knowing that a Parliamentary Committee sat longer upon it than so many geese upon their eggs, but hatched nothing. Two circumstances,

connected with pauperism in Ireland, are worthy of notice. The first is this—the Roman Catholics, who certainly constitute the bulk of the population, feel themselves called upon, from the peculiar tenets of their religion, to exercise indiscriminate charity largely to the begging poor. They act under the impression that eleemosynary good works possess the power of cancelling sin to an extent almost incredible. Many of their religious legends are founded upon this view of the case; and the reader will find an appropriate one in the Priest's sermon, as given in our tale of the "Poor Scholar." That legend is one which the author has many a time heard from the lips of the people, by whom it was implicitly believed. A man who may have committed a murder over night, will the next day endeavour to wipe away his guilt by alms given for the purpose of getting the benefit of "the poor man's prayer." The principle of assisting our distressed fellow-creatures, when rationally exercised, is one of the best in society; but here it becomes entangled with error, superstition, and even with crime—acts as a bounty upon imposture, and in some degree predisposes to guilt, from an erroneous belief that sin may be cancelled by alms and the prayers of mendicant impostors.

The second point, in connexion with pauperism, is the immoral influence that proceeds from the relation in which the begging poor in Ireland stand towards the class by whom they are supported. These, as we have already said, are the poorest, least educated, and consequently the most ignorant description of the people. They are, also, the most numerous.

There have been for centuries, probably since the Reformation itself, certain opinions floating among the lower classes in Ireland, all tending to prepare them for some great change in their favour, arising from the discomfiture of heresy, the overthrow of their enemies, and the exaltation of themselves and their religion.

Scarcely had the public mind subsided after the Rebellion of Ninety-eight, when the success of Bonaparte directed the eyes and the hopes of the Irish people towards *him*, as the person designed to be their deliverer. Many a fine fiction has the author of this work heard about that great man's escapes, concerning the bullets that conveniently turned aside from his person, and the sabres that civilly declined to cut him down. Many prophecies too were related, in which the glory of this country under his reign was touched off in the happiest colours. Pastorini also gave such notions an impulse. Eighteen twenty-five was to be the year of their deliverance: George the Fourth was never to fill the British throne; and the mill of Lowth was to be turned three times with human blood. The miller with the two thumbs was then living, said the mendicants, for they were the principal propagators of these opinions, and the great expounders of their own prophecies; so that of course there could be no further doubt upon the subject. Several of them had seen him, a red-haired man with broad shoulders, stout legs, exactly as a miller ought to have, and two thumbs on his right hand; all precisely as the prophecy had stated. Then there was *Beal-derg*, and several others of the

fierce old Milesian chiefs, who along with their armies lay in an enchanted sleep, all ready to awake and take a part in the delivery of the country. "Sure such a man," and they would name him, in the time of the mendicant's grandfather, "was once going to a fair to sell a horse—well and good; the time was the dawn of morning, a little before day-light: he met a man who undertook to purchase his horse; they agreed upon the price, and the seller of him followed the buyer into a Rath, where he found a range of horses, each with an armed soldier asleep by his side, ready to spring upon him if awoke. The purchaser cautioned the owner of the horse as they were about to enter the subterraneous dwelling, against touching either horse or man; but the countryman happening to stumble, inadvertently laid his hand upon a sleeping soldier, who immediately leaped up, drew his sword, and asked, "*Wuil anam inh?*" Is the time in it? Is the time arrived? To which the horse-dealer of the Rath replied, "*Ha niel. Gho dhee collhow areesht.*" No; go to sleep again. Upon this, the soldier immediately sank down in his former position, and unbroken sleep reigned throughout the cave. The influence on the warm imaginations of ignorant people, of the fictions concocted by vagrant mendicants is very pernicious. They fill their minds with the most palpable absurdities, and, what is worse, with opinions, which, along with being injurious to those who receive them, in every instance insure for those who propagate them a cordial and kind reception.

These mendicants consequently pander, for their

own selfish ends, to the prejudices of the ignorant, which they nourish and draw out in a manner that has in no slight degree been subversive of the peace of the country. Scarcely any political circumstance occurs which they do not immediately seize upon and twist to their own purposes, or in other words to the opinions of those from whom they derive their support. When our present police first appeared in their uniforms and black belts, another prophecy, forsooth, was fulfilled. Immediately before the downfall of heresy, a body of "Black Militia" was to appear. The police then are the black militia, and the people consider themselves another step nearer the consummation of their vague speculations.

In the year Ninety-eight, the Irish mendicants were active agents, clever spies, and expert messengers on the part of the people; and to this day, they carry falsehood and the materials of outrage in its worst shape, into the bosom of peaceable families, who would, otherwise, never become connected with a system which is calculated to bring nothing but ruin and destruction upon those who permit themselves to join it.

This evil, and it is no small one, would, by the introduction of poor laws, be utterly abolished; the people would not only be more easily improved by purer knowledge; but education, when received, would not be corrupted by the infusion into it of such ingredients as the above. In many other points of view the confirmed and hacknied mendicants of Ireland, are a great evil to the morals of the people. We could easily detail them, but such not being our

object at present, we will now dismiss the subject of poor-laws, and resume our narrative.

Far—far different from this description of impostors, were Owen M'Carthy and his family. Their misfortunes were not the consequences of negligence or misconduct on their own part. They struggled long but unavailingly against high rents and low markets; against neglect on the part of the landlord and his agent; against sickness, famine, and death. They had no alternative but to beg or starve. Owen was willing to work, but he could not procure employment, and provided he could, the miserable sum of sixpence a day, when food was scarce and dear, would not support him, his wife, and six little ones. He became a pauper, therefore, only to avoid starvation.

Heavy and black was his heart, to use the strong expression of the people, on the bitter morning when he set out to encounter the dismal task of seeking alms in order to keep life in himself and his family. The plan was devised on the preceding night; but to no mortal, except his wife, was it communicated. The honest pride of a man whose mind was above committing a mean action, would not permit him to reveal what he considered the first stain that ever was known to rest upon the name of M'Carthy. He therefore sallied out under the beating of the storm, and proceeded, without caring much whither he went, until he got considerably beyond the bounds of his own parish.

In the mean time hunger pressed keenly upon him and them. The day had no appearance of clearing

up; the heavy rain and sleet beat into their thin, worn garments, and the clamour of his children for food began to grow more and more importunate. They came to the shelter of a hedge which enclosed on one side a remote and broken road, along which, in order to avoid the risk of being recognised, they had preferred travelling. Owen stood here for a few minutes to consult with his wife, as to where and when they should "make a beginning;" but on looking round he found her in tears.

"Kathleen, asthore," said he, "I can't bid you not to cry; bear up, acushla machree; bear up: sure, as I said when we came out this mornin', there's a good God above us, that can still turn over the good lafe for us, if we put our hopes in him."

"Owen," said his sinking wife; "it's not altogether bekase we're brought to this, that I'm cryin'. No indeed."

"Thin what ails you, Kathleen darlin?"

The wife hesitated, and evaded the question for some time; but at length upon his pressing her for an answer, with a fresh gush of sorrow, she replied,

"Owen, since you *must* know—och, may God pity us!—since you must know, its wid hunger—*wid hunger!* I kept, unknownst, a little bit of bread to give the childhre this mornin', and that was part of it I gave you yesterday early—I'm near two days fastin'."

"Kathleen! Kathleen! Och! sure I know your worth, avillish. You were too good a wife, an' too good a mother, amost! God forgive me, Kathleen! I fretted about beggin', dear; but as my heavenly

father's above me, I'm now happier to beg wid you by my side, nor if I war in the best house in the province widout you! Hould up, avourneen, for a while. Come, on, childhre, darlins, an' the first house we meet we'll ax their char——, their assistance. Come on, darlins, all of yees. Why my heart's asier, so it is. Sure we have your mother, childhre, safe wid us, an' what signifies any thing so long as *she's* left to us."

He then raised his wife tenderly, for she had been compelled to sit from weakness, and they bent their steps to a decent farm-house that stood a few perches off the road, about a quarter of a mile before them.

As they approached the door, the husband hesitated a moment; his face got paler than usual, and his lip quivered, as he said—"Kathleen—"

"I know what you're goin' to say, Owen. No, acushla, *you* won't; *I'll* ax it myself."

"Do," said Owen, with difficulty; "I can't do it; but I'll overcome my pride afore long, I hope. It's thryin' to me, Kathleen, an' you know it is—for you know how little I ever expected to be brought to this."

"Husht, avillish! We'll thry, then, in the name o' God."

As she spoke, the children, herself, and her husband, entered, to beg for the first time in their lives a morsel of food. Yes! timidly — with a blush of shame, red even to crimson, upon the pallid features of Kathleen—with grief acute and piercing—they entered the house together.

For some minutes they stood and spoke not. The

unhappy woman, unaccustomed to the language of supplication, scarcely knew in what terms to crave assistance. Owen, himself, stood back, uncovered, his fine but much changed features overcast with an expression of deep affliction. Kathleen cast a single glance at him as if for encouragement. Their eyes met; she saw the upright man—the last remnant of the M'Carthy—himself once the friend of the poor, of the unhappy, of the afflicted—standing crushed and broken down by misfortunes which he had not deserved, waiting with patience for a morsel of charity. Owen, too, had *his* remembrances. He recollected the days when he sought and gained the pure and fond affections of his Kathleen; when beauty, and youth, and innocence encircled her with their light and their grace, as she spoke or moved; he saw her a happy wife and mother in her own home, kind and benevolent to all who required her good word or her good office, and remembered the sweetness of her light-hearted song; but now she was homeless. He remembered, too, how she used to plead with himself for the afflicted. It was but a moment; yet when their eyes met, that moment was crowded by recollections that flashed across their minds with a keen sense of a lot so bitter and wretched as theirs. Kathleen could not speak, although she tried; her sobs denied her utterance; and Owen involuntarily sat upon a chair, and covered his face with his hand.

To an observing eye it is never difficult to detect the cant of imposture, or to perceive distress when it is real. The good woman of the house, as is usual in Ireland, was in the act of approaching them,

unsolicited, with a double handful of meal—that is what the Scotch and northern Irish call a *gowpen*—or as much as both hands locked together can contain—when, noticing their distress, she paused a moment, eyed them more closely, and exclaimed—

"What's this? Why there's something wrong wid you, good people! But first an' foremost take this, in the name an' honour of God."

"May the blessin' of the same Man* rest upon yees!" replied Kathleen. "This is a sorrowful thrial to us; for it's our first day to be upon the world; an' this is the first help of the kind we ever axed for, or ever got; an' indeed now I find we haven't even a place to carry it in. I've no—b—b—cloth, or any thing to hould it."

"Your first, is it?" said the good woman. "Your first! May the marciful queen o' heaven look down upon yees, but it's a bitther day yees war driven out on! Sit down, there, you poor crathur. God pity you, I pray this day, for you *have* a heart-broken look! Sit down awhile, near the fire, you an' the childre! Come over, darlins, an' warm yourselves! Och, oh! but it's the thousand pities to see sich fine childre—handsome an' good lookin' even as they are, brought to this! Come over, good man; get near the fire, for you're wet an' could all of yees. Brian, *ludher* them two lazy thieves o' dogs out o' that. *Eiree suas, a wadhee bradagh, agus go mah*

* God is sometimes thus termed in Ireland. By "Man" here is meant person or being. He is also called the "Man above; although this must have been intended for, and often is applied, to Christ only.

a shin!—be off wid yees, ye lazy divils, that's not worth your feedin'! Come over, honest man."

Owen and his family were placed near the fire; the poor man's heart was full, and he sighed heavily.

"May he that it plased to thry us," he exclaimed, "reward you for this! We are," he continued, "a poor an' a sufferin' family; but it's the will of God that we should be so, an' sure we can't complain widout committin' sin. All we ax now is, that it may be plasin' to him that brought us low, to enable us to bear up undher our thrials. We would take it to our choice to beg an' be honest, sooner nor to be wealthy, an' wicked! We have our failins an' our sins, God help us; but still there's nothin' dark or heavy on our consciences. Glory be to the name o' God for it!"

"Throth, I believe you," replied the farmer's wife; "there's thruth an' honesty in your face; one may easily see the remains of dacency about yees all. Musha, throw your little things aside, an' stay where yees are to-day: you can't bring out the childhre undher the teem of rain an' sleet that's in it. Wurrah dheelish, but it's the bitther day all out! Faix, Paddy will get a dhrookin, so he will, at that weary fair wid the stirks, poor bouchal—a son of ours that's gone to Ballyboulteen to sell some cattle, an' he'll not be worth three hapuns afore he comes back. I hope he'll have sinse to go into some house, when he's done, an' dhry himself well, any how, besides takin' somethin' to keep out the could. Put by your things, an' don't think of goin' out sich a day."

"We thank you," replied Owen. "Indeed we're

glad to stay undher your roof; for, poor things, they're badly able thravel sich a day—these childhre."

"Musha, yees ate no breakfast, maybe?"

Owen and his family were silent. The children looked wistfully at their parents, anxious that they should confirm what the good woman surmised; the father looked again at his famished brood and his sinking wife, and nature overcame him.

"Food did not crass our lips this day," replied Owen; "an' I may say hardly any thing yestherday."

"Oh, blessed mother! Here, Katty Murray, drop scrubbin' that dresser, an' put down the midlin' pot for stirabout. Be livin'! *manim an diouol*, woman alive, handle yourself; you might a had it boilin' by this. God presarve us!—to be two days widout atin! Be the crass, Katty, if you're not alive, I'll give you a douse o' the churnstaff that'll bring the fire to your eyes! Do you hear me?"

"I do hear you, an' did often feel you, too, for fraid hearin' would'nt do. You think there's no places in the world but your own, I b'lieve. Faix, indeed! it's well come up wid us, to be randied about wid no less a switch than a churnstaff!"

"Is it givin' back talk you are? Bad end to me, if you look crucked but I'll lave you a mark to remimber me by. What woman 'ud put up wid you but myself, you shkamin flipe? It wasn't to give me your bad tongue I hired you, but to do your business; an' be the crass above us, if you turn your tongue on me agin, I'll give you the weight o' the churnstaff. Is it bekase they're poor people that it

plased God to bring to this, that you turn up your nose at doin' any thing to sarve them? There's not wather enough there, I say—put in more. What signifies all the stirabout that 'ud make? Put plinty in: it's betther always to have too much than too little. Faix, I tell you, you'll want a male's meat an' a night's lodgin' afore you die, if you don't mend your manners."

"Och, musha, the poor girl is doin' her best," observed Kathleen; an' I'm sure she wouldn't be guilty of usin' pride to the likes of us, or to any one that the Lord has laid his hand upon."

"She had betther not, while I'm to the fore," said her mistress. "What is she herself? Sure if it was a sin to be poor, God help the world. No; it's neither a sin nor a shame."

"Thanks be to God, no," said Owen; "it's neither the one nor the other. So long as we keep a fair name, an' a clear conscience, we can't ever say that our case is hard."

After some further conversation a comfortable breakfast was prepared for them, of which they partook with an appetite sharpened by their long abstinence from food. Their stay here was particularly fortunate, for as they were certain of a cordial welcome, and an abundance of that which they much wanted—wholesome food—the pressure of immediate distress was removed. They had time to think more accurately upon the little preparations for misery which were necessary, and, as the day's leisure was at their disposal, Kathleen's needle and

scissars were industriously plied in mending the tattered clothes of her husband and her children, in order to meet the inclemency of the weather.

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer's wife addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life—

Wife—"Now, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Farmer—"Ay, good people, you're takin' the world on your heads——"

Wife—"Hould your tongue, Brian, an' suck your dudeen. It's me that's spakin' to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I'm done, an' then you may prache till Tib's Eve, an' that's neither before Christmas nor afther it."

Farmer—"Sure I'm sayin' nothin', Evleen, barrin' houldin' my tongue, *a shuchar*.'*

Wife—"You're takin' the world on yees, an' God knows 'tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs."

Farmer—"A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it's that."

Wife—"Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You'll be puttin' in your gab, an' me spakin'? How-an'-diver, as I was sayin', our house was the first yees came to, an' they say there's a great blessin' to thim that gives the *first* charity to a poor man or woman settin' out to look for their bit."

* My sugar.

Farmer—"Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit."

Wife—"By the crass, Brian, you'd vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittiogue?* Hould your whisht now, an' suck your dudeen, I say; sure I allow you a quarther o' tobaccy a week, an' what right have you to be puttin' in your gosther when other people's spakin'?"

Farmer—"Go an."

Wife—"So, you see, the long an' the short of it is, that whenever you happen to be in this side of the counthry, always come to *us*. You know the ould sayin'—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin', an' whin he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yees a day or two; an' God he sees you're heartily welcome to all yees got?"

Farmer—"God he sees you're heartily welcome——"

Wife—"*Chorp an diouol*, Brian, hould your tongue, or I'll turn you out o' the kitchen. One can't hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin' dhrone. By the crass I'll—eh? Will you whisht, now?"

Farmer—"Go an. Amn't I dhrawin' my pipe?"

Wife—"Well dhraw *it;* but don't dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin——. Do you hear me? an' the sthrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yees, an' bless yees! But afore yees go, jist lave your blessin' wid us; for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor."

"The Lord bless you an' yours!" said Owen,

fervently. "May you an' them never—oh, may you never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! for your good kind heart desarves it."

Farmer—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the rulin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you*, but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me;* dhough I've prayed for it amost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther an' summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

They then recommenced their journey, after having once more blessed, and been invited, by their charitable entertainers, who made them promise never to pass their house without stopping a night with them.

It is not our intention to trace Owen M'Carthy and his wife through all the variety which a wandering pauper's life affords. He never could reconcile himself to the habits of a mendicant. His honest pride and integrity of heart raised him above it; neither did he sink into the whine and cant of imposture, nor the slang of knavery. No; there was a touch of manly sorrow about him, which neither time, nor familiarity with his degraded mode of life, could take away from him. His usual observation to his wife, and he never made it without a pang of intense bitterness, was—"Kathleen, darlin', it's thrue we have

enough to ate an' to dhrink; but *we have no home! —no home!*" To a man like him it was a thought of surpassing bitterness, indeed.

"Ah! Kathleen," he would observe, "if we had but the poorest shed that could be built, provided it was *our own*, wouldn't we be happy? The bread we ate, avourneen, doesn't do us good. We don't work for it; it's the bread of shame and idleness: and yet it's Owen M'Carthy that ates it! But, avourneen, that's past; an' we'll never see our own home, or our own hearth agin. That's what's cuttin' into my heart, Kathleen. Never!—never!"

Many a trial, too, of another kind was his patience called upon to sustain; particularly from the wealthy and the more elevated in life, when his inexperience as a mendicant led him to solicit their assistance.

"Begone, Sirrah, off my grounds!" one would say. "Why don't you work, you sturdy impostor," another would exclaim, "rather than stroll about so lazily, training your brats to the gallows?" "You should be taken up, fellow, as a vagrant," a third would observe; "and if I ever catch you coming up my avenue again, depend upon it, I will slip my dogs at you and your idle spawn."

Owen, on these occasions, turned away in silence; he did not curse them; but the pangs of his honest heart went before Him who will, sooner or later, visit upon the heads of such men their cruel spurning and neglect of the poor.

"Kathleen," he observed to his wife, one day, about a year or more after they had begun to beg; "Kathleen, I have been turnin' it in my mind, that

some of these childhre might sthrive to earn their bit an' sup, an' their little coverin' of clo'es, poor things. We might put them to herd cows in the summer, an' the *girshas* to somethin' else in the farmers' houses. What do you think, asthore ?"

" For God's sake do, Owen; sure my heart's crushed to see them—my own childhre, that I could lay down my life for—beggin' from door to door. Och, do something for them that way, Owen, an' you'll relieve the heart that loves them. It's a sore sight to a mother's eye, Owen, to see her childhre beggin' their morsel."

" It is darlin—it is; we'll hire out the three eldest,—Brian, an' Owen, an' Pether, to herd cows; an' we may get Peggy into some farmer's house to do loose jobs an' run of messages. Then we'd have only little Kathleen an' poor Ned along wid us. I'll thry any way, an' if I can get them places, who knows what may happen? I have a plan in my head that I'll tell you, thin."

" Arrah, what is it, Owen jewel? Sure if I know it, maybe when I'm sorrowful, that thinkin' of it, an' lookin' forrid to it will make me happier. An' I'm sure, acushla, you would like that."

" But, maybe, Kathleen, if it would'nt come to pass, that the disappointment 'ud be heavy on you ?"

" How could it, Owen ? Sure we can't be worse nor we are, whatever happens ?"

" Thrue enough indeed, I forgot that; an' yet we might, Kathleen. Sure we'd be worse, if we or the childhre had bad health."

" God forgive me thin, for what I said! We

might be worse. Well, but what is the plan, Owen?"

"Why, when we get the childhre places, I'll sthrive to take a little house, an' work as a cottar, Then, Kathleen, '*we'd have a home of our own.*' I'd work from light to light; I'd work before hours an' afther hours; ay, nine days in the week, or we'd be comfortable in our own little home. We might be poor, Kathleen, I know that, an' hard pressed, too; but then, as I said, we'd have our own home, an' our own hearth; our morsel, if it 'ud be homely, would be sweet, for it would be the fruits of our own labour."

"Now, Owen, do you think you could manage to get that?"

"Wait, acushla, till we get the childhre settled. Then I'll thry the other plan, for its good to thry any thing that could take us out of this disgraceful life."

This humble speculation was a source of great comfort to them. Many a time have they forgotten their sorrows in contemplating the simple picture of their happy little cottage. Kathleen, in particular, drew with all the vivid colouring of a tender mother, and an affectionate wife, the various sources of comfort and contentment to be found even in a cabin, whose inmates are blessed with a love of independence, industry, and mutual affection.

Owen, in pursuance of his intention, did not neglect, when the proper season arrived, to place out his eldest children among the farmers. The reader need not be told that there was that about him which

gained respect. He had, therefore, little trouble in obtaining his wishes on this point, and to his great satisfaction, he saw three of them hired out to earn their own support.

It was now a matter of some difficulty for him to take a cabin and get employment. They had not a single article of furniture, and neither bed nor bedding, with the exception of blankets almost worn past use. He was resolved, however, to give up, at all risks, the life of a mendicant. For this purpose, he and the wife agreed to adopt a plan quite usual in Ireland, under circumstances somewhat different from his: this was, that Kathleen should continue to beg for their support, until the first half-year of their children's service should expire; and in the mean time, that he, if possible, should secure employment for himself. By this means, his earnings, and that of his children, might remain untouched, so that in half a year, he calculated upon being able to furnish a cabin, and proceed, as a cottier, to work for, and support his young children and his wife, who determined, on her part, not to be idle any more than her husband. As the plan was a likely one, and as Owen was bent on earning his bread, rather than be a burthen to others, it is unnecessary to say that it succeeded. In less than a year he found himself once more in a home, and the force of what he felt on sitting for the first time since his pauperism, at his own hearth, may easily be conceived by the reader. For some years after this, Owen got on slowly enough; his wages as a daily labourer being so miserable, that it required him to exert every

nerve to keep the house over their head. What, however, will not carefulness and a virtuous determination, joined to indefatigable industry, do?

After some time, backed as he was by his wife, and even by his youngest children, he found himself beginning to improve. In the mornings and the evenings he cultivated his garden and his rood of potato ground. He also collected with a wheelbarrow, which he borrowed from an acquaintance, compost from the neighbouring road; scoured an old drain before his door; dug rich earth, and tossed it into the pool of rotten water beside the house, and in fact, adopted several other modes of collecting manure. By this means, he had, each spring, a large portion of rich stuff on which to plant his potatoes. His landlord permitted him to spread this for planting upon his land; and Owen, ere long, instead of a rood, was able to plant half an acre, and ultimately, an acre of potatoes. The produce of this, being more than sufficient for the consumption of his family, he sold the surplus, and with the money gained by the sale was enabled to sow half an acre of oats, of which, when made into meal, he disposed of the greater share.

Industry is capital; for even when unaided by capital it creates it; whereas, idleness with capital, produces only poverty and ruin. Owen after selling his meal and as much potatoes as he could spare, found himself able to purchase a cow. Here was means of making more manure; he had his cow, and he had also straw enough for her provender during the winter. The cow by affording milk to his

family, enabled them to live more cheaply; her butter they sold, and this in addition to his surplus meal and potatoes every year, soon made him feel that he had a few guineas to spare. He now bethought him of another mode of helping himself forward in the world: after buying the best "slip" of a pig he could find, a stye was built for her, and ere long he saw a fine litter of young pigs within a snug shed. These he reared until they were about two months old, when he sold them, and found that he had considerably gained by the transaction. This department, however, was under the management of Kathleen, whose life was one of incessant activity, and employment. Owen's children, during the period of his struggles and improvements, were, by his advice, multiplying *their* little capital as fast as himself. The two boys, who had now shot up into the stature of young men, were at work as labouring servants in the neighbourhood. The daughters were also engaged as servants with the adjoining farmers. The boys bought each a pair of two year old heifers, and the daughter one. These they sent to graze up in the mountains at a trifling charge, for the first year or two: when they became springers, they put them to rich infield grass for a few months, until they got a marketable appearance, after which their father brought them to the neighbouring fairs, where they usually sold to great advantage, in consequence of the small outlay required in rearing them.

In fact, the principle of industry ran through the family. There was none of them idle; none of them a burthen or a check upon the profits made by the

labourer. On the contrary, " they laid their shoulders together," as the phrase is, and proved to the world, that when the proper disposition is followed up by suitable energy and perseverance, it must generally reward him who possesses it.

It is certainly true that Owen's situation in life *now* was essentially different from that which it had been during the latter years of his struggles *as a farmer*. It was much more favourable, and far better calculated to develope successful exertion. If there be a class of men deserving public sympathy, it is that of the small farmers of Ireland. Their circumstances are fraught with all that is calculated to depress and ruin them; rents far above their ability, increasing poverty, and bad markets. The land, which during the last war, might have enabled the renter to pay three pounds per acre, and yet still maintain himself with tolerable comfort, could not now pay more than one pound, or at the most, one pound ten; and yet, such is the infatuation of landlords, that, in most instances, the terms of leases taken out then are rigorously exacted. Neither can the remission of yearly arrears be said to strike at the root of the evils under which they suffer. The fact of the disproportionate rent hanging over them is a disheartening circumstance, that paralyzes their exertion, and sinks their spirits. If a landlord remit the rent for one term, he deals more harshly with the tenant at the next: whatever surplus, if any, his former indulgence leaves in the tenant's hands, instead of being expended upon his property as capital, and being permitted to lay the foundation of hope

and prosperity, is drawn from him, at next term, and the poor struggling tenant is thrown back into as much distress, embarrassment, and despondency as ever. There are, I believe, few tenants in Ireland of the class I allude to, who are not from one gale to three in arrear. Now, how can it be expected, that such men will labour with spirit and earnestness to raise crops which they may never reap? crops which the landlord may seize upon to secure as much of his rent as he can.

We have known a case in which the arrears were not only remitted, but the rent lowered to a reasonable standard, such as, considering the markets, could be paid. And what was the consequence? The tenant who was looked upon as a negligent man, from whom scarcely any rent could be got, took courage, worked his farm with a spirit and success which he had not evinced before; and ere long was in a capacity to pay his gales to the very day; so that the judicious and humane landlord, was finally a gainer by his own excellent economy. This was an experiment, and it succeeded beyond expectation.

Owen M'Carthy did not work with more zeal and ability as an humble cottier, than he did, when a farmer; but the tide was against him as a landholder, and instead of having advanced, he actually lost ground until he became a pauper. No doubt, the peculiarly unfavourable run of two hard seasons, darkened by sickness and famine, were formidable obstacles to him; but he must eventually have failed, even had they not occurred. They accelerated his downfall, but did not cause it.

The Irish people, though poor, are exceedingly anxious to be independent. Their highest ambition is to hold a farm. So strong is this principle in them, that they will, without a single penny of capital, or any visible means to rely on, without consideration or forethought, come forward and offer a rent, which, if they reflected only for a moment, they must feel to be unreasonably high. This, indeed, is a great evil in Ireland. But what, in the mean time, must we think of those imprudent landlords, and their more imprudent agents, who let their land to such persons, without proper inquiry into their means, knowledge of agriculture, and general character as moral and industrious men. A farm of land is to be let; it is advertised through the parish; application is to be made before such a day, to so and so. The day arrives, the agent or the land-steward looks over the proposals, and after singling out the highest bidder, declares him tenant, as a matter of course. Now, perhaps, this said tenant does not possess a shilling in the world, nor a shilling's worth. Most likely he is a new married man, with nothing but his wife's bed and bedding, his wedding suit, and his blackthorn cudgel, which we may suppose him to keep in reserve for the bailiff. However, he commences his farm; and then follow the shiftings, the scramblings, and the fruitless struggles to succeed, where success is impossible. His farm is not half tilled; his crops are miserable; the gale day has already passed; yet, he can pay nothing until he takes it out of the land. Perhaps, he runs away—makes a moon-light flitting—and, by

the aid of his friends, succeeds in bringing the crop with him. The landlord, or agent, declares he is a knave; forgetting that the man had no other alternative, and that they were the greater knaves and fools too, for encouraging him to undertake a task that was beyond his strength.

In calamity we are anxious to derive support from the sympathy of our friends; in our success we are eager to communicate to them the power of participating in our happiness. When Owen once more found himself independent and safe, he longed to realize two plans on which he had for some time before been seriously thinking. The first was to visit his former neighbours, that they might at length know that Owen M'Carthy's station in the world was such as became his character. The second was, if possible, to take a farm in his native parish, that he might close his days among the companions of his youth, and the friends of his maturer years. He had, also, another motive; there lay the burying place of the M'Carthys, in which slept the mouldering dust of his own "golden haired" Alley. With them,—in his daughter's grave—he intended to sleep his long sleep. Affection for the dead is the memory of the heart. In no other grave-yard could he reconcile it to himself to be buried; to it had all his forefathers been gathered; and though calamity had separated him from the scenes where they had passed through existence, yet he was resolved that death should not deprive him of its last melancholy consolation;—that of reposing with all that remained of the "departed," who had loved him, and whom he had

loved. He believed, that to neglect this, would be to abandon a sacred duty, and felt sorrow at the thought of being like an absent guest from the assembly of *his own* dead; for there is a principle of undying hope in the heart, that carries, with bold and beautiful imagery, the realities of life into the silent recesses of death itself.

Having formed the resolution of visiting his old friends at Tubber Derg, he communicated it to Kathleen and his family; his wife received the intelligence with undisguised delight.

"Owen," she replied, "indeed I'm glad you mintioned it. Many a time the thoughts of our place, an' the people about it, comes over me. I know, Owen, it'll go to your heart to see it; but still, avourneen, you'd like, too, to see the ould faces an' the warm hearts of them that pitied us, an' helped us, as well as they could, whin we war broken down."

"I would, Kathleen; but I'm not goin' merely to see thim an' the place. I intind, if I can, to take a bit of land somewhere near Tubber Derg. I'm unasy in my mind, for 'fraid I'd not sleep in the grave-yard where all belongin' to me lie."

A chord of the mother's heart was touched; and in a moment the memory of their beloved child brought the tears to her eyes.

"Owen, avourneen, I have one requist to ax of you, an' I'm sure you won't refuse it to me: if I die afore you, let me be buried wid Alley. Who has a right to sleep so near her as her own mother?"

"The child's in my heart still," said Owen, suppressing his emotion; "thinkin' of the unfortunate

mornin' I wint to Dublin, brings her back to me. I see her standin', wid her fair pale face—pale—oh, my God!—wid hunger an' sickness—her little thin clo'es, an' her goolden hair, tossed about by the dark blast—the tears in her eyes, an' the smile, that she once had, on her face—houldin' up her mouth, an' sayin' 'Kiss *me* agin, father;' as if she knew, somehow, that I'd never see her, nor her me, any more. An' whin I looked back, as I was turnin' the corner, there she stood, strainin' her eyes afther her father, that she was then takin' the last sight of until the judgment day!"

His voice here became broken, and he sat in silence for a few minutes.

"It's sthrange," he added, with more firmness, "how she's so often in my mind!"

"But, Owen dear," replied Kathleen, "sure it was the will of God that she should lave us. She's now a bright angel in heaven, an' I dunna if it's right—indeed, I doubt it's sinful for us to think so much about her. Who knows but her innocent spirit is makin' inthercession for us all, before the blessed Mother o' God! Who knows but it was her that got us the good fortune that flowed in upon us, an' that made our strugglin' an' our labourin' turn out so *lucky*."

The idea of being *lucky* or *unlucky* is, in Ireland, an enemy to industry. It is certainly better that the people should believe success in life to be, as it is, the result of virtuous exertion, than of contingent circumstances, over which they themselves have no control. Still there was something beautiful in the

superstition of Kathleen's affections; something that touched the heart and its dearest associations.

"It's very true, Kathleen," replied her husband; "but God is ever ready to help them that keeps an honest heart, an' do every thing in their power to live creditably. They may fail for a time, or he may thry them for awhile, but sooner or later good intintions and honest labour will be rewarded. Look at ourselves—blessed be his name!"

"But whin do you mane to go to Tubber Derg, Owen?"

"In the beginnin' of the next week. An' Kathleen, ahagur, if you remimber the bitther mornin' we came upon the world—but we'll not be spakin' of that now. I don't like to think of it. Some other time, maybe, when we're settled among our ould friends, I'll mintion it."

"Well, the Lord bliss your endayvours, any how! Och, Owen, do thry an' get us a snug farm somewhere near them. But you didn't answer me about Alley, Owen?"

"Why, you must have your wish, Kathleen, although I intended to keep that place for myself. Still we can sleep one on aich side of her; an' that may be asily done, for our buryin' ground is large: so set your mind at rest on that head. I hope God won't call us till we see our childhre settled dacently in the world. But sure, at all evints, let his blessed will be done!"

"Amin! amin! It's not right of any one to keep their hearts fixed too much upon the world; nor even, they say, upon one's own childhre."

" People may love their childhre as much as they plase Kathleen, if they don' let their *grah* for them spoil the crathurs, by givin' them their own will, till they become headstrong an' overbearin'. Now, let my linen' be as white as a bone before Monday, plase goodness; I hope, by that time, that Jack Dogherty will have my new clo'es made; for I intind to go as dacent as ever they seen me in my best days."

" An' so you will, too, avillish. Throth, Owen, its you that'll be the proud man, steppin' in to them in all your grandeur! Ha, ha, ha! The spirit o' the M'Carthys is in you still, Owen."

" Ha, ha, ha! It is, darlin'; it is, indeed; an' I'd be sarry it wasn't. I long to see poor Widow Murray. I dunna is her son, Jemmy, married. Who knows, afther all we suffered, but I might be able to help her yet?—that is, if she stands in need of it. But, I suppose, her childhre's grown up now, an' able to assist her. Now, Kathleen, mind Monday next; an' have every thing ready. I'll stay away a week or so, at the most, an' afther that I'll have news for you about all o' them."

When Monday morning arrived, Owen found himself ready to set out for Tubber Derg. The tailor had not disappointed him; and Kathleen, to do her justice, took care that the proofs of her good housewifery should be apparent in the whiteness of his linen. After breakfast, he dressed himself in all his finery; and it would be difficult to say whether the harmless vanity that peeped out occasionally from his simplicity of character, or the open and undisguised

triumph of his faithful wife, whose eye rested on him with pride and affection, was most calculated to produce a smile.

"Now, Kathleen," said he, when preparing for his immediate departure, "I'm thinkin' of what they'll say, when they see me so smooth an' warm lookin'. I'll engage they'll be axin one another, "Musha, how did Owen M'Carthy get an, at all, to be so well to do in the world, as he appears to be, afther failin' on his ould farm?' "

"Well, but Owen, you know how to manage them."

"Throth, I do that. But there's *one* thing they'll never get out o' me, any way."

"You won't tell *that* to any o' them, Owen?"

"Kathleen, if I thought they only suspected it, I'd never show my face in Tubber Derg agin. I think I could bear to be—an' yet it 'ud be a hard struggle wid me too—but I *think* I could bear to be buried among black strangers, rather than it should be said, over my grave, among my own, 'there's where Owen M'Carthy lies—who was the only man, of his name, that ever begged his morsel on the king's highway. There he lies, the descendant of the great M'Carthy Mores, an' yet he was a beggar.' I know, Kathleen achora, it's neither a sin nor a shame to ax one's bit from our fellow-creatures, whin fairly brought to it, widout any fault of our own; but still I feel something in me, that can't bear to think of it widout shame an' heaviness of heart."

"Well, it's one comfort, that nobody knows it but ourselves. The poor childhre, for their own sakes,

won't ever breathe it; so that it's likely the sacret i'll be berrid wid us."

"I hope so, acushla. Does this coat sit asy atween the shouldhers? I feel it catch me a little."

"The sorra nicer. There; it was only your waistcoat that was turned down in the collar. Here—hould your arm. There now—it wanted to be pulled down a little at the cuffs. Owen, it's a beauty; an' I think I have good right to be proud out of it, for it's every thread my own spinnin'."

"How do I look in it, Kathleen? Tell me thruth, now."

"Throth, you're twenty years younger; the never a day less."

"I think I needn't be ashamed to go afore my ould friends in it, any way. Now bring me my staff, from undher the bed above; an', in the name o' God, I'll set out."

"Which o' them, Owen? Is it the oak or the blackthorn?

"The oak, acushla. Oh, no; not the blackthorn. It's it that I brought to Dublin wid me, the unlucky thief, an' that I had while we wor *a shaughran.* Divil a one o' me but 'ud blush in the face, if I brought it even in my hand afore them. The oak, ahagur; the oak. You'll get it atween the foot o' the bed an' the wall."

When Kathleen placed the staff in his hand, he took off his hat and blessed himself, then put it on, looked at his wife, and said—"Now darlin', in the name o' God, I'll go. Husht, avillish machree, don't be cryin'; sure I'll be back to you in a week."

"Och! I can't help it, Owen. Sure this is the second time you war ever away from me more nor a day; an' I'm thinkin' of what happened, both to you an' me, the *first* time you wint. Owen, acushla, I feel that if any thing happened you, I'd break my heart."

"Arrah, what 'ud happen me, darlin', wid God to protect me? Now, God be wid you Kathleen dheelish, till I come back to you wid good news, I hope. I'm not goin' in sickness an' misery, as I wint afore, to see a man that wouldn't hear my appale to him; an' I'm lavin' you comfortable, agrah, an' wantin' for nothin'. Sure it's only about five-an'-twenty miles from this—a mere step. The good God bless an' take care of you, my darlin' wife, till I come home to you!"

He kissed the tears that streamed from her eyes; and, hemming several times, pressed her hand, his face rather averted, then grasped his staff, and commenced his journey.

Scenes like this were important events to our humble couple. Life, when untainted by the crimes and artificial manners which destroy its purity, is a beautiful thing to contemplate among the virtuous poor; and, where the current of affection runs deep and smooth, the slightest incident will agitate it. So was it with Owen M'Carthy and his wife. Simplicity, truth, and affection, constituted their character. In them there was no complication of incongruous elements. The order of their virtues was not broken, nor the purity of their affections violated, by the anomalous blending together of opposing principles, such as are to be found in those who are

involuntarily contaminated by the corruption of human society.

Owen had not gone far, when Kathleen called to him: "Owen, ahagur—stand, darlin'; but don't come back a step, for fraid o' bad luck." *

"Did I forget any thing, Kathleen?" he inquired. "Let me see; no; sure I have my beads an' my tobaccy box, an' my two clane shirts an' hankerchers in the bundle. What is it, acushla?"

"I needn't be axin' you, for I know you wouldn't forget it; but for fraid you might—Owen, whin you're at Tubber Derg, go to little Alley's grave, an' look at it; an' bring me back word how it appears. You might get it cleaned up, if there's weeds or any thing growin' upon it; an', Owen, would you bring me a bit o' the clay, tied up in your pocket. Whin you're there, spake to her; tell her it was the lovin' mother that bid you, an' say any thing that you'd think might keep her asy, an' give her pleasure. Tell her we're not now as we wor whin she was wid us; that we don't feel hunger, nor cowld, nor want; and' that nothin' is a throuble to us, barrin' that we miss *her*—ay, even yet—a *suillish machree*† that she was—that we miss her fair face an' goolden head from among us. Tell her this; an' tell her it was the lovin' mother that said it, an' that sint the message to her."

* When an Irish peasant sets out on a journey, or to transact business in fair or market, he will not, if possible, turn back. It is considered unlucky; as it is also to be crossed by a hare, or met by a red-haired woman.

† Light of my heart.

"I'll do it all, Kathleen; I'll do it all—all. An' now go in, darlin', an' don't be frettin'. Maybe we'll soon be near her, plase God, where we can see the place she sleeps in, often."

They then separated again; and Owen, considerably affected by the maternal tenderness of his wife, proceeded on his journey. He had not, actually, even at the period of his leaving home, been able to determine on what particular friend he should first call. That his welcome would be hospitable, nay, enthusiastically so, he was certain. In the mean time, he vigorously pursued his journey; and partook neither of refreshment nor rest, until he arrived, a little after dusk, at a turn of the well-known road, which, had it been day-light, would have opened to him a view of Tubber Derg. He looked towards the beeches, however, under which it stood; but to gain a sight of it was impossible. His road now lying a little to the right, he turned to the house of his sterling friend, Frank Farrell, who had given him and his family shelter and support, when he was driven, without remorse, from his own holding. In a short time he reached Frank's residence, and felt a glow of sincere satisfaction at finding the same air of comfort and warmth about it as formerly. Through the kitchen window he saw the strong light of the blazing fire, and heard, ere he presented himself, the loud hearty laugh of his friend's wife, precisely as light and animated as it had been fifteen years before.

Owen lifted the latch and entered, with that fluttering of the pulse which every man feels on meeting with a friend, after an interval of many years.

"Musha, good people, can yees tell me is Frank Farrell at home?"

"Why, thin, he's not jist widin now, but he'll be here in no time entirely," replied one of his daughters. "Won't you sit down, honest man, an' we'll sind for him?"

"I'm thankful to you," said Owen. "I'll sit, sure enough, till he comes in."

"Why thin!—eh! it must—it *can* be no other!" exclaimed Farrell's wife, bringing over a candle and looking Owen earnestly in the face; "sure I'd know that voice all the world over! Why, thin, marciful Father—Owen M'Carthy,—Owen M'Carthy, is it your four quarthers that's livin' an' well? Queen o' heaven, Owen M'Carthy darlin', you're welcome!" the word was here interrupted by a hearty kiss from the kind housewife;—"welcome a thousand an' a thousand times! *Vick na hoiah!* Owen dear, an' are you livin' at all? An' Kathleen, Owen, an' the childhre, an' all of yees—an' how are they?"

"Throth, we're livin' an' well, Bridget; never was bethter, thanks be to God an' you, in our lives."

Owen was now surrounded by such of Farrell's children, as were old enough to remember him; every one of whom he shook hands with, and kissed.

"Why, thin, the Lord save my sowl, Bridget," said he, "are these the little bouchaleens an' colleens that were runnin' about my feet whin I was here afore? Well, to be sure! How they do shoot up! An' is this Atty?"

"No; but *this* is Atty, Owen; faix, Brian outgrew him; an' here's Mary, an' this is Bridget Oge."

"Well!—well! But, where did these two young shoots come from? this boy an' the colleen here? They worn't to the fore, in *my* time, Bridget."

"This is Owen, called afther yourself,—an' this is Kathleen. I needn't tell you who she was called afther."

"*Gutsho, alanna? thurm pogue?*—come here, child, and kiss me," said Owen, to his little namesake; "an' sure I can't forget the little woman here; *gutsho*, a colleen and kiss me too."

Owen took her on his knee, and kissed her twice.

"Och, but, poor Kathleen," said he, "will be the proud woman of this, when she hears it; in throth she will be that."

"Arrah! what's comin' over me!" said Mrs. Farrell. "Brian, run up to Micky Lowrie's, for your father. An' see, Brian, don't say who's wantin' him, till we give him a start. Mary, come here, acushla," she added to her eldest daughter in a whisper—"take these two bottles, an' fly up to Peggy Finigan's for the full o' them o' whiskey. Now be back before your're there, or if you don't, that I mightn't, but you'll see what you'll get. Fly, aroon, an' don't let the grass grow undher your feet. An' Owen darlin'—but first sit over to the fire:—here get over to this side, it's the snuggest;—arrah, Owen—an' sure I dunna what to ax you first. You're all well? all to the fore?"

"All well, Bridget, an' thanks be to heaven, all to the fore."

"Glory be to God! Throth it warms my heart to hear it. An' the childhre's all up finely, boys an' girls?"

" Throth, they are, Bridget, as good lookin' a family o' childhre as you'd wish to see. An' what is betther, they're as good as they're good-lookin"

" Throth, they couldn't but be that, if they tuck at all afther their father an' mother. Bridget aroon, rub the pan betther—an' lay the knife down, I'll cut the bacon myself, but go an' get a dozen o' the freshest eggs ;—an' Kathleen, Owen, how does poor Kathleen look? Does she stand it as well as yourself?"

" As young as ever you seen her. God help her! —a thousand degrees betther now nor whin you seen her last."

" An' well to do, Owen?—now tell the thruth? Och, musha, I forget who I'm spakin to, or I would'nt disremimber the ould sayin' that's abroad this many a year :—who ever knew a M'Carthy of Tubber Derg to tell a lie, break his word, or refuse to help a friend in distress.' But, Owen, you're well to do in the world?"

" We're as well, Bridget, or may be betther, nor you ever knew us, except, indeed, afore the ould lase was run out wid us."

" God be praised agin ! Musha, turn round a little, Owen, for 'fraid Frank 'ud get too clear a sight of your face at first. Arrah, do you think he'll know you? Och, to be sure he will ; I needn't ax. Your voice would tell upon you, any day."

" Know me ! Indeed Frank 'ud know my shadow. He'll know me wid half a look."

And Owen was right, for quickly did the eye of his old friend recognise him, despite of the little plot that was laid to try his penetration. To describe their

interview would be to repeat the scene we have already attempted to depict between Owen and Mrs. Farrell. No sooner were the rites of hospitality performed, than the tide of conversation began to flow with greater freedom. Owen ascertained one important fact, which we will here mention, because it produces in a great degree, the want of any thing like an independent class of yeomanry in the country. On inquiring after his old acquaintances, he discovered that a great number of them, owing to high rents, had emigrated to America. They belonged to that class of independent farmers, who after the expiration of their old leases, finding the little capital which they had saved beginning to diminish, in consequence of rents which they could not pay, deemed it more prudent, while any thing remained in their hands, to seek a country where capital and industry might be made available. Thus did the landlords, by their mismanagement and neglect, absolutely drive off their estates the only men, who, if properly encouraged, were capable of becoming the strength and pride of the country. It is this system, joined to the curse of middlemen and sub-letting, which has left the country without any third grade of decent substantial yeomen, who might stand as a bond of peace between the highest and the lowest classes. It is this which has split the kingdom into two divisions, constituting the extreme ends of society—the wealthy, and the wretched. If this third class existed, Ireland would neither be so political nor discontented as she is; but on the contrary, more remarkable for peace and industry. At present, the lower classes,

being too poor, are easily excited by those who promise them a better order of things than that which exists. These theorists step into the exercise of that legitimate influence which the landed proprietors have lost by their neglect. There is no middle class in the country, who can turn round to them and say, "Our circumstances are easy, we want nothing; carry your promises to the poor, for that which you hold forth to *their* hopes, *we* enjoy in reality." The poor soldier, who, because he was wretched, volunteered to go on the forlorn hope, made a fortune; but when asked if he would go on a second enterprise of a similar kind, shrewdly replied; "General, I am *now* an independent man; send some *poor* devil on your forlorn hope who wants to make a fortune."

Owen now heard anecdotes and narratives of all occurrences, whether interesting or strange, that had taken place during his absence. Among others, was the death of his former landlord, and the removal of the Agent who had driven him to beggary. Tubber Derg, he found, was then the property of a humane and considerate man, who employed a judicious and benevolent gentleman to manage it.

"One thing, I can tell you," said Frank; "it was but a short time in the new Agent's hands, when the dacent farmers stopped goin' to America."

"But Frank," said Owen, and he sighed on putting the question, "who is in Tubber Derg, now?"

"Why thin, a son of ould Rousin, Red-head's, of Tullyvernon—young Con Roe, or the Ace o' Hearts—for he was called both by the youngsters—if you remimber him. His head's as red, an' double as big,

even, as his father's was, an' you know that no hat would fit ould Con, until he sent his measure to Jemmy Lamb, the hatter. Dick Nugent put it out on him, that Jemmy always made Rousin' Read-head's hat, either upon the half-bushel pot, or a five gallen keg of whiskey. 'Talkin of the keg,' says Dick, 'for the matther o' that,' says he, 'divil a much differ the hat will persave; for the one'—meanin' ould Con's head, who was a hard drinker—'the one,' says Con, 'is as much a keg as the other—ha! ha! ha!' Dick met Rousin' Read-head another day; 'Arrah Con,' says he, 'why do you get your hats made upon a *pot*, man alive? Sure that's the rason that you're so fond o' *pot*een'. A quare mad crathur was Dick, an' would go forty miles for a fight. Poor fellow, he got his scull broke in a skrimmage betwixt the Redmonds and the O'Hanlon's; an' his last words were, 'Bad luck to you, Redmond—O'Hanlon, I never thought *you*, above all men, dead an' gone, would be the death o' me'. Poor fellow! he was for pacifyin' them, for a wondher; but instead o' that, he got pacified himself."

"An' how is young Con doin', Frank?"

"Hut, divil a much time he has to do aither well or ill, yit. There was four tenants on Tubber Derg since you left it, an' he's the fifth. It's hard to say how he'll do; but I believe he's the best o' thim, for so far. That may be owin' to the landlord. The rent's let down to him; an' I think he'll be able to take bread, an' good bread too, out of it."

"God send, poor man!"

"Now, Owen, would you like to go back to it?"

"I can't say that. I love the place, *but I suffered too much in it.* No; but I'll tell you, Frank, if there was e'er a snug farm near it that I could get rasonable, I'd take it."

Frank slapped his knee exultingly. "*Ma chuirp!* —do you say so, Owen?"

"Indeed, I do."

"Thin, upon my song, that's the luckiest thing I ever knew. There's, this blessed minute, a farm o' sixteen acres, that the Lacys is lavin'—goin' to America—an' it's to be set. They'll go the week afther next, an' the house needn't be cowld, for you can come to it the very day afther they lave it."

"Well," said Owen, "I'm glad of that. Will you come wid me to-morrow, an' we'll see about it?"

"To be sure I will; an' what's betther, too; the Agint is a son of ould Misther Rogerson's, a man that knows you an' the history o' them you came from, well. An', another thing, Owen! I tell you, whin it's abroad that *you* want to take the farm, there's not a man in the parish would bid agin you. You may know that yourself."

"I think, indeed, they would rather sarve me than otherwise," replied Owen; "an', in the name o' God, we'll see what can be done. Misther Rogerson, himself, 'ud spake to his son for me; so that I'll be sure of his intherest. Arrah, Frank, how is an ould friend o' mine, that I have a great regard for—poor Widow Murray?"

"Widow Murray! Poor woman, *she's* happy.

"You don't mane she's dead?"

"She's dead, Owen, and happy, I trust, in

the Saviour. She died last spring was a two years."

"God be good to her sowl! An' are the childhre in her place still? It's she that was the dacent woman."

"Throth, they are; an' sorrow a betther doin' family in the parish than they are. It's they that'll be glad to see you, Owen. Many a time I seen their poor mother, heavens be her bed, lettin' down the tears, whin she used to be spakin' of you, or mintionin' how often you sarved her; espeshially, about some day or other that you previnted her cows from bein' canted for the rint. She's dead now, an' God he knows, an honest hard-workin' woman she ever was."

"Dear me, Frank, isn't it a wondher to think how the people dhrop off! There's Widow Murray, one o' my ouldest frinds, an' Pether M'Mahon, an' Barny Lorinan—not to forget pleasant Rousin' Red-head—all taken away! Well!—well! Sure it's the will o' God! We can't be here always."

After much conversation, enlivened by the bottle, though but sparingly used on the part of Owen, the hour of rest arrived, when the family separated for the night,

The grey dawn of a calm beautiful summer's morning found Owen up and abroad, long before the family of honest Frank had risen. When dressing himself, with an intention of taking an early walk, he was asked by his friend why he stirred so soon, or if he—his host—should accompany him.

"No," replied Owen; "lie still; jist let me look

over the counthry while it's asleep. Whin I'm musin' this a-way I don't like any body to be along wid me. I have a place to go an' see, too—an' a message—a tendher message, from poor Kathleen, to deliver, that I wouldn't wish a second person to hear. Sleep, Frank. I'll jist crush the head o' my pipe agin one o' the half-burned turf that the fire was raked wid, an' walk out for an hour or two. Afther our breakfast we'll go an' look about this new farm."

He sallied out as he spoke, and closed the door after him in that quiet thoughtful way for which he was ever remarkable. The season was midsummer, and the morning wanted at least an hour of sun-rise. Owen ascended a little knoll, above Frank's house, on which he stood and surveyed the surrounding country with a pleasing but melancholy interest. As his eye rested on Tubber Derg, he felt the difference strongly between the imperishable glories of nature's works, and those which are executed by man. His house he would not have known, except by its site. It was not, in fact, the same house, but another which had been built in its stead. This disappointed and vexed him. An object on which his affections had been placed was removed. A rude stone house stood before him, rough and unplastered; against each end of which was built a stable and cow-house, sloping down from the gables to low doors at both sides; adjoining these rose two mounds of filth, large enough to be easily distinguished from the knoll on which he stood. He sighed as he contrasted it with the neat and beautiful farm-house, which shone there in his happy days, white as a lily,

beneath the covering of the lofty beeches. There was no air of comfort, neatness, or independence, about it; on the contrary, every thing betrayed the evidence of struggle and difficulty, joined, probably, to want both of skill and of capital. He was disappointed, and turned his gaze upon the general aspect of the country, and the houses in which either his old acquaintances or their children lived. The features of the landscape were, certainly, the same; but even here was a change for the worse. The warmth of colouring, which wealth and independence give to the appearance of a cultivated country, was gone. Decay and coldness seemed to brood upon every thing he saw. The houses, the farm-yards, the ditches, and enclosures, were all marked by the blasting proofs of national decline. Some exceptions there were to this disheartening prospect; but they were only sufficient to render the torn and ragged evidences of poverty, and its attendant—carelessness—more conspicuous. He left the knoll, knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and putting it into his waistcoat pocket, ascended a larger hill, which led to the grave-yard where his child lay buried. On his way to this hill, which stood about half a mile distant, he passed a few houses of an humble description, with whose inhabitants he had been well acquainted. Some of these stood nearly as he remembered them; but others were roofless, with their dark mud gables either fallen in or partially broken down. He surveyed their smoke-coloured walls with sorrow; and looked, with a sense of the transient character of all man's works, upon the chickweed, docks, and nettles.

which had shot up so rankly on the spot where many a chequered scene of joy and sorrow had flitted over the circumscribed circle of humble life, ere the annihilating wing of ruin swept away them and their habitations.

When he had ascended the hill, his eye took a wider range. The more distant and picturesque part of the country lay before him. "Ay!" said he, in a soliloquy, "Lord bless us, how sthrange is this world!—an' what poor crathurs are men! There's the dark mountains, the hills, the rivers, an' the green glens, all the same; an' nothin' else amost but's changed! The very song of that blackbird, in thim thorn-bushes an' hazels below me, is like the voice of an ould friend to my ears. Och, indeed, hardly that, for even the voice of man changes; but that song is the same as I heard it for the best part o' my life. That mornin' star, too, is the same bright crathur up there that it ever was! God help us! Hardly any thing changes but man, an' he seems to think that he can never change; if one is to judge by his thoughtlessness, folly, an' wickedness!"

A smaller hill, around the base of which went the same imperfect road that crossed the glen of Tubber Derg, prevented him from seeing the grave-yard to which he was about to extend his walk. To this road he directed his steps. On reaching it he looked, still with a strong memory of former times, to the glen in which his children, himself, and his ancestors had all, during their day, played in the happy thoughtlessness of childhood and youth. But the dark and ragged house jarred upon his feelings. He

turned from it with pain, and his eyes rested upon the still green valley with evident relief. He thought of his "buried flower"—"his goolden haired darlin'," as he used to call her—and almost fancied that he saw her once more wandering waywardly through its tangled mazes, gathering berries, or strolling along the green meadow, with a garland of gowans about her neck. Imagination, indeed, cannot heighten the image of the dead whom we love; but even if it could, there was no standard of ideal beauty in her father's mind beyond that of her own. She had been beautiful; but her beauty was pensive: a fair yet melancholy child; for the charm that ever encompassed her was one of sorrow and tenderness. Had she been volatile and mirthful, as children usually are, he would not have carried so far into his future life the love of her which he cherished. Another reason why he still loved her strongly, was a consciousness that her death had been occasioned by distress and misery; for, as he said, when looking upon the scenes of her brief but melancholy existence—"Avourneen machree, I remimber to see you pickin' the berries; but asthore—asthore—it wasn't for play you did it. It was to keep away the cuttin' of hunger from your heart! Of all our childhre every one said that *you* wor the M'Carthy—never sayin' much, but the heart in you ever full of goodness an' affection. God help me, I'm glad—an', now that I'm comin' near it—loth to see her grave."

He had now reached the verge of the grave-yard. Its fine old ruin stood there as usual, but not altogether without the symptoms of change. Some persons

had, for the purposes of building, thrown down one of its most picturesque walls. Still its ruins clothed with ivy, its mullions moss-covered, its gothic arches and tracery, grey with age, were the same in appearance as he had ever seen them.

On entering this silent palace of death, he reverently uncovered his head, blessed himself, and, with feelings deeply agitated, sought the grave of his beloved child. He approached it; but a sudden transition from sorrow to indignation took place in his mind, even before he reached the spot on which she lay. "Sacred Mother!" he exclaimed, "who has daared to bury in our ground? Who has—what villain has attimpted to come in upon the M'Carthys —upon the M'Carthy Mores, of Tubber Derg? Who could—had I no friend to prev—— eh? Sacred Mother, what's this? Father of heaven forgive me! Forgive me, sweet Saviour, for this bad feelin' I got into! Who—who—could raise a head-stone over the darlin' o' my heart, widout one of us knowin' it? Who—who could do it? But let me see if I can make it out. Oh, who could do this blessed thing, for the poor an' the sorrowful?" He began, and with difficulty read as follows:—

"Here lies the body of Alice M'Carthy, the beloved daughter of Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, aged nine years. She was descended from the M'Carthy Mores.

"Requiescat in pace.

"This head-stone was raised over her by widow Murray, and her son, James Murray, out of grateful respect for Owen and Kathleen M'Carthy, who never suffered the widow and orphan, or a distressed neighbour, to crave assistance from them in vain, until it pleased God to visit them with affliction."

"Thanks to you, my Saviour!" said Owen, dropping on his knees over the grave. "Thanks an' praise be to your holy name, that in the middle of my poverty—of all my poverty—I was not forgotten! nor my darlin' child let to lie widout honour in the grave of her family! Make me worthy, blessed Heaven, of what is written down upon me here! An' if the departed spirit of her that honoured the dust of my buried daughter is unhappy, oh, let her be relieved, an' let this act be remimbered to her! Bless her son, too, gracious Father, an' all belongin' to her on this earth! an', if it be your holy will, let them never know distress, or poverty, or wickedness!"

He then offered up a Pater Noster for the repose of his child's soul, and another for the kind-hearted and grateful widow Murray, after which he stood to examine the grave with greater accuracy.

There was, in fact, no grave visible. The little mound, under which lay what was once such a touching image of innocence, beauty, and feeling, had sunk down to the level of the earth about it. He regretted this, inasmuch as it took away, he thought, part of her individuality. Still he knew it was the spot wherein she had been buried, and with much of that vivid feeling, and strong figurative language, inseparable from the habits of thought and language of the old Irish families, he delivered the mother's message to the inanimate dust of her once beautiful and heart-loved child. He spoke in a broken voice, for even the mention of her name aloud, over the clay that contained her, struck with a fresh burst of sorrow upon his heart.

"Alley," he exclaimed, in Irish, "Alley, *nhien machree*, your father that loved *you* more nor he loved any other human crathur, brings a message to you from the mother of your heart, avourneen! She bid me call to see the spot where you're lyin', my buried flower, an' to tell you that we're not now, thanks be to God, as we wor whin you lived wid us. We are well to do now, *acushla oge machree*, an' not in hunger, an' sickness, an' misery, as we wor whin you suffered them all! You will love to hear this, pulse of our hearts, an' to know that, through all we suffered—an' bittherly we did suffer since you departed—we never let you out of our memory. No, *asthore villish*, we thought of you, an' cried afther our poor dead flower, many an' many's the time. An' she bid me tell you, darlin' of my heart, that we feel nothin' now so much as that you are not wid us to share our comfort an' our happiness. Oh, what wouldn't the mother give to have you back wid her; but it can't be—an' what wouldn't I give to have you before my eyes agin, in health an' in life—but it can't be. The lovin' mother sent this message to you, Alley. Take it from her; she bid me tell you that we are well an' happy; our name is pure, and, like yourself, widout spot or stain. Won't you pray for us before God, an' get him an' his blessed Mother to look on us wid favour an' compassion? Farewell, Alley asthore! May you sleep in peace, an' rest on the breast of your great Father in heaven, until we all meet in happiness together. It's your father that's spakin' to you, our lost flower; an' the hand that often smoothed your goolden head is now upon your grave."

He wiped his eyes as he concluded, and after lifting a little of the clay from her grave, he tied it carefully up, and put it into his pocket.

Having left the grave-yard, he retraced his steps towards Frank Farrell's house. The sun had now risen, and as Owen ascended the larger of the two hills which we have mentioned, he stood again to view the scene that stretched beneath him. About an hour before all was still; the whole country lay motionless, as if the land had been a land of the dead. The mountains, in the distance, were covered with the thin mists of morning; the milder and richer parts of the landscape had appeared in that dim grey distinctness which gives to distant objects such a clear outline. With the exception of the blackbird's song, every thing seemed as if stricken into silence; there was not a breeze stirring; both animate and inanimate nature reposed as if in a trance; the very trees appeared asleep, and their leaves motionless, as if they had been of marble. But now the scene was changed. The sun had flung his splendour upon the mountain-tops, from which the mists were tumbling in broken fragments to the vallies between them. A thousand birds poured their songs upon the ear; the breeze was up, and the columns of smoke from the farm-houses and cottages played, as if in frolic, in the air. A white haze was beginning to rise from the meadows; early teams were afoot; and labourers going abroad to their employment. The lakes in the distance shone like mirrors; and the clear springs on the mountain sides glittered in the sun, like gems on which the eye could

scarcely rest. Life, and light, and motion, appear to be inseparable. The dew of morning lay upon nature like a brilliant veil, realizing the beautiful image of Horace, as applied to woman:

Vultus nimium lubricus aspici.

By and by the songs of the early workmen were heard; nature had awoke; and Owen, whose heart was strongly, though unconsciously, alive to the influence of natural religion, participated in the general elevation of the hour, and sought with freshened spirits the house of his entertainer.

As he entered this hospitable roof, the early industry of his friend's wife presented him with a well-swept hearth and a pleasant fire, before which had been placed the identical chair that they had appropriated to his own use. Frank was enjoying "a blast o' the pipe;" after having risen; to which luxury the return of Owen gave additional zest and placidity. In fact, Owen's presence communicated a holiday spirit to the family; a spirit, too, which declined not for a moment during the period of his visit.

"Frank," said Owen, "to tell you the thruth, I'm not half plased wid you this mornin'! I think you didn't thrate me as I ought to expect to be thrated."

"Musha, Owen M'Carthy, how is that?"

"Why, you said nothin' about widow Murray raisin' a head-stone over our child. You kep me in the dark there, Frank, an' sich a start I never got as I did this mornin', in the grave-yard beyant."

"Upon my sowl, Owen, it wasn't my fau't, nor

any of our tau'ts; for, to tell you the thruth, we had so much to think and discoorse of last night, that it never sthruck me, good or bad. Indeed it was Bridget that put it first in my head, afther you wint out, an' thin it was too late. Ay, poor woman, the dacent strain was ever in her, the heavens be her bed!"

"Frank, if any one of her family was to abuse me till the dogs wouldn't lick my blood, I'd only give them back good for evil afther that. Oh, Frank, that goes to my heart! To put a head-stone over my weeny goolden haired darlin', for the sake of the little thrifles I sarved thim in! Well!—may none belonging to her ever know poverty or hardship! but if they do, an' that I have it——. How-an'-iver, no matther. God bless thim! God bless thim! Wait till Kathleen hears it!"

"An' the best of it was, Owen, that she never expected to see one of your faces. But, Owen, you think too much about that child. Let us talk of something else. You seen Tubber Derg wanst more."

"I did; an' I love it still, in spite of the state it's in."

"Ah! it's different from what it was in your happy days. I was spakin' to Bridget about the farm, an' she advises us to go, widout losin' a minute, an' take it if we can."

"It's near this place I'll die, Frank. I'd not rest in my grave if I wasn't berrid among my own; so we'll take the farm if possible."

"Well, then, Bridget, hurry the breakfast, avour-

neen; an' in the name o' Goodness, we'll set out, an' clinch the business this very day."

Owen, as we said, was prompt in following up his determinations. After breakfast they saw the Agent and his father, for both lived together. Old Rogerson had been intimately acquainted with the M'Carthy's, and, as Frank had anticipated, used his influence with the Agent in procuring for the son of his old friend and acquaintance the farm which he sought.

"Jack," said the old gentleman, "you don't probably know the history and character of the Tubber Derg M'Carthys so well as I do. No man ever required the written bond of a M'Carthy; and it was said of them, and is said still, that the widow and orphan, the poor man or the stranger, never sought their assistance in vain. I, myself, will go security, if necessary, for Owen M'Carthy."

"Sir," replied Owen, "I'm thankful to you; I'm grateful to you. But I wouldn't take the farm, or bid for it at all, unless I could bring forrid enough to stock it as I wish, an' to lay in all that's wantin' to work it well. It 'ud be useless for me to take it—to struggle a year or two—impoverish the land—an' thin run away out of it. No, no; I have what'll put me upon it wid dacency an' comfort."

"Then, since my father has taken such an interest in you, M'Carthy, you must have the farm. We shall get leases prepared, and the business completed, in a few days; for I go to Dublin on this day week. Father, I now remember the character of this family; and I remember, too, the sympathy which was felt

for one of them, who was harshly ejected, about seventeen or eighteen years ago, out of the lands on which his forefathers had lived, I understand, for centuries."

"I am that man, Sir," returned Owen. "It's too long a story to tell now; but it was only out o' *part* of the lands, Sir, that I was put. What I held was but a poor patch compared to what the family held in my grandfather's time. A great part of it went out of our hands at his death."

"It was very kind of you, Misther Rogerson, to offer to go security for him," said Frank; "but if security was wantin', Sir, I'd not be willin' to let any body but myself back him. I'd go all I'm worth in the world—an', be my sowl, double as much—for the same man."

"I know that, Frank, an' I thank you; but I could put security in Mr. Rogerson's hands here, if it was wanted. Good mornin', an' thank you both, gintlemen. To tell yees the thruth," he added, with a smile, "I long to be among my ould friends—manin' the people, an' the hills, an' the green fields of Tubber Derg—agin; an', thanks be to Goodness, sure I will soon."

In fact, wherever Owen went, within the bounds of his native parish, his name, to use a significant phrase of the people, was before him. His arrival at Frank Farrell's was now generally known by all his acquaintances, and the numbers who came to see him were almost beyond belief. During the two or three successive days, he went among his old "*croniens;*" and no sooner was his arrival at any particular house

intimated, than the neighbours all flocked to him. Scythes were left idle, spades were stuck in the earth, and work neglected for the time being; all crowded about him with a warm and friendly interest, not proceeding from idle curiosity, but from affection and respect for the man.

The interview between him and widow Murray's children was affecting. Owen felt deeply the delicate and touching manner in which they had evinced their gratitude for the services he had rendered them; and young Murray remembered, with a strong gush of feeling, the distresses under which they lay when Owen had assisted them. Their circumstances, owing to the strenuous exertions of the widow's eldest son, soon afterwards improved; and, in accordance with the sentiments of hearts naturally grateful, they had taken that method of testifying what they felt. Indeed, so well had Owen's unparalleled affection for his favourite child been known, that it was the general opinion about Tubber Derg that her death had broken his heart.

"Poor Owen! he's dead," they used to say; "the death of his weeny one, while he was away in Dublin, gave him the finishin' blow. It broke his heart."

Before the week was expired, Owen had the satisfaction of depositing the lease of his new farm, held at a moderate rent, in the hands of Frank Farrell; who tying it up along with his own, secured it in "the black chest." Nothing remained now but to return home forthwith, and communicate the intelligence to Kathleen. Frank had promised, as soon

as the Lacys should vacate the house, to come with a long train of cars, and a number of his neighbours, in order to transfer Owen's family and furniture to his new dwelling. Every thing, therefore, had been arranged; and Owen had nothing to do but hold himself in readiness for the welcome arrival of Frank and his friends.

Owen, however, had no sense of enjoyment when not participated in by his beloved Kathleen. If he felt sorrow, it was less as a personal feeling than as a calamity to her. If he experienced happiness, it was doubly sweet to him as reflected from his Kathleen. All this was mutual between them. Kathleen loved Owen precisely as he loved Kathleen. Nor let our readers suppose that such characters are not in humble life. It is in humble life, where the springs of feeling are not corrupted by dissimulation and evil knowledge, that the purest, and tenderest, and strongest virtues are to be found.

As Owen approached his home, he could not avoid contrasting the circumstances of his return *now* with those under which, almost broken-hearted after his journey to Dublin, he presented himself to his sorrowing and bereaved wife about sixteen years before. He raised his hat, and thanked God for the success which had, since that period, attended him, and, immediately after his silent thanksgiving, entered the house.

His welcome, our readers may be assured, was tender and affectionate. The whole family gathered about him, and, on his informing them that they were once more about to reside on a farm adjoining

to their beloved Tubber Derg, Kathleen's countenance brightened, and the tear of delight gushed to her eyes.

"God be praised, Owen," she exclaimed; "we will have the ould place afore our eyes, an' what is betther, we will be near where Alley is lyin'. But that's true, Owen," she added, "did you give the light of our hearts the mother's message?"

Owen paused, and his features were slightly overshadowed, but only by the solemnity of the feeling.

"Kathleen," said he, "I gave her your message; but, avourneen, I have sthrange news for you about Alley."

"What, Owen? What is it, acushla? Tell me quick!"

"The blessed child was not neglected: no but she was honoured in our absence. A head-stone was put over her, an' stands there purtily this minute."

"Mother of Glory, Owen!"

"It's thruth. Widow Murray an' her son Jemmy put it up, wid words upon it that brought the tears to my eyes. Widow Murray is dead, but her childher 's doin' well. May God bless an' prosper them, an' make her happy!"

The delighted mother's heart was not proof against the widow's gratitude, expressed, as it had been, in a manner so affecting. She rocked herself to and fro in silence, whilst the tears fell in showers down her cheeks. The grief, however, which this affectionate couple felt for their child, was not always such as the reader has perceived it to be. It was rather a revival of emotions that had long slumbered, but never

died; and the associations arising from the journey to Tubber Derg, had thrown them back, by the force of memory, almost to the period of her death. At times, indeed, their imagination had conjured her up strongly, but the present was an epoch in the history of their sorrow.

There is little more to be said. Sorrow was soon succeeded by cheerfulness and the glow of expected pleasure, which is ever the more delightful as the pleasure is pure. In about a week their old neighbours, with their carts and cars, arrived; and before the day was closed on which Owen removed to his new residence, he found himself once more sitting at his own hearth, among the friends of his youth, and the companions of his maturer years. Ere the twelvemonth elapsed, he had his house perfectly white, and as nearly resembling that of Tubber Derg in its better days as possible. About two years ago we saw him one evening in the month of June, as he sat on a bench beside his door, singing with a happy heart his favourite song of "*Colleen dhas crootha na mo.*" It was about an hour before sunset. The house stood on a gentle eminence, beneath which a sweep of green meadow stretched away to the skirts of Tubber Derg. Around him was a country naturally fertile, and in spite of the national depression, still beautiful to contemplate. Kathleen and two servant maids were milking, and the whole family were assembled about the door.

"Well, childher," said the father, "didn't I tell yees the bitther mornin' we left Tubber Derg, not to cry or be disheartened—that 'there was a good God

above, who might do somethin' for us *yet?*' I never *did* give up my trust in Him, an' I never *will*. You see, afther all our little throubles, he has wanst more brought us together, an' made us happy. Praise an' glory to his name!"

I looked at him as he spoke. He had raised his eyes to heaven, and a gleam of elevated devotion, perhaps worthy of being called sublime, irradiated his features. The sun, too, in setting, fell upon his broad temples and iron-grey locks, with a light solemn and religious. The effect to me, who knew his noble character, and all that he had suffered, was as if the eye of God then rested upon the decline of a virtuous man's life with approbation;—as if he had lifted up the glory of his countenance upon him. Would that many of his thoughtless countrymen had been present! They might have blushed for their crimes, and been content to sit and learn wisdom at the feet of Owen M'Carthy.

NOTES.

The Lianhan Shee, Vol. II. p. 44.

As the reader may be disposed to consider the nature of the priest's death an unjustifiable stretch of fiction, I have only to say in reply, that it is no fiction at all. It is not, I believe, more than forty, or perhaps fifty years, since a priest committed his body to the flames for the purpose of saving his soul by an incrematory sacrifice. The object of a suicide unparalleled in the history of that mad and melancholy crime, was ascertained by a letter which he left behind him. There is an old dormant superstition still to be found in Ireland on this very subject. It is believed by some, that a priest guilty of great crimes possesses the privilege of securing salvation by self-sacrifice. We have heard two or three legends among the people in which this principle predominated. The outlines of one of these, called "The Young Priest and Brian Braar," were as follows :—

A young priest on his way to the College of Valladolid, in Spain, was benighted; but found a lodging in a small inn on the road side. Here he was tempted by a young maiden of great beauty, who, in the moment of his weakness, extorted from him a bond signed with his blood, binding himself to her for ever. She turned out to be an evil spirit: and the young priest proceeded to Valladolid with a heavy heart, confessed his crime to the Superior, who sent him to the Pope, who sent him to a Friar in the County of Armagh, called Brian Braar, who sent him to the devil. The devil, on the strength of Brian Braar's letter, gave him a warm reception, held a cabinet council immediately, and laid the despatch before his colleagues, who

agreed that the claimant should get back his bond from the brimstone lady who had inveigled him. She, however, obstinately refused to surrender it, and stood upon her bond, until threatened with being thrown three times into Brian Braar's furnace. This tamed her: the man got his bond, and returned to Brian Braar on earth. Now Brian Braar had for three years past abandoned God, and taken to the study of magic with the devil; a circumstance which accounts for his influence below. The young priest, having possessed himself of his bond, went to Lough Derg to wash away his sins; and Brian Braar, having also become penitent, the two worthies accompanied each other to the lake. On entering the boat, however, to cross over to the island, such a storm arose as drove them back. Brian assured his companion that he himself was the cause of it.

"There is now," said he, "but one more chance for *me;* and we must have recourse to it."

He then returned homewards, and both had reached a hillside near Brian's house, when the latter desired the young priest to remain there a few minutes, and he would return to him; which he did with a hatchet in his hand.

"Now," said he, "you must cut me into four quarters, and mince my body into small bits, then cast them into the air, and let them go with the wind."

The priest, by much entreaty, complied with his wishes, and returned to Lough Derg, where he lived twelve years upon one meal of bread and water *per diem*. Having now purified himself, he returned home; but on passing the hill where he had minced the Friar, he was astonished to see the same man celebrating mass, attended by a very penitential looking congregation of spirits.

"Ah," said Brian Braar, when mass was over, "you are now a happy man. With regard to my state, *for the voluntary sacrifice I have made of myself, I am to be saved;* but I must remain on this mountain until the Day of Judgment." So saying he disappeared.

There is little to be said about the superstition of the *Luanhan Shee*, except that it existed as we have drawn it, and that it

is now fading fast away. There is also something appropriate in associating the heroine of this little story with the being called the *Lianhan Shee*, because, setting the superstition aside, any female who fell into her crime was called *Lianhan Shee*. *Lianhan Shee an Sagarth* signifies a priest's paramour, or, as the country people say, "Miss." Both terms have now nearly become obsolete.

"*Pether Donovan, that would break a stone for the marrow,*"
Vol. II. p. 72.

I know not whether this may be considered worthy of a note or not. I have myself frequently seen and tasted what is appropriately termed by the peasantry "Stone Marrow." It is found in the heart of a kind of soft granite, or perhaps I should rather say freestone. The country people use it medicinally, but I cannot remember what particular disease it is said to cure. It is a soft saponaceous substance, not unpleasant to the taste, of a bluish colour, and melts in the mouth, like the fat of cold meat, leaving the palate greasy. How far an investigation into its nature and properties might be useful to the geologist or physician, it is not for me to conjecture. As the fact appeared to be a curious one, and necessary, moreover to illustrate the expression used in the text, I thought it not amiss to mention it. It may be a *bonne bouche* for the geologists.

END OF VOL. II.

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